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THE MESS-BOOK

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OR,

STRAY THOUGHTS ON MILITARY REFORM.

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STRAY THOUGHTS ON MILITARY REFORM.

REPUBLISHED FROM THE 'TOMAHAWK.'

WITH A CHAPTER ON THE

PURCHASE SYSTEM OF THE ARMY.

REPRINTED FROM THE 'BRITANNIA.'

BY

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TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE EDWARD CARDWELL, M.P.,

THE ABLEST STATESMAN WHO HAS EVER HELD THE SEALS OF THE

WAR OFFICE,

IN GRATITUDE FOR HIS ADVANCED VIEWS,

AND IN HOPES OF HIS ADVANCING FURTHER,

These Pages on Military Reform

ARE RESPECTFULLY, THOUGH WITHOUT PERMISSION,

DEDICATED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE following "Stray Thoughts" on Military Reform were originally published in the pages of the 'Tomahawk' from time to time, as the several subjects appeared to call for the special attention of the Public.

The discussion of "How to reform the Army" is now not an uncommon topic in the columns of the periodical Press; but the 'Tomahawk' may, without presumption, claim to have led the van in drawing attention to the subject, more especially as relates to the question of the Constitutional Government of the Army.

This important subject has been more elaborately treated in a Work just issued from Albemarle Street, entitled 'The Military Forces of the Crown,'

by Mr. Clode, the Solicitor of the War Department. In this able Work the Student of Constitutional History will find a vast fund of information supplied from authentic documents, and displayed with much Legal acumen.

Meanwhile, it has been hoped that the republication, in a collected shape, of these lighter Sketches on the subject of Military Reform may not be without value in the consideration of questions that are every day assuming greater importance.

MILITARY REFORM.

I.

The Organization of the War Office.

(January 18, 1868.)

THERE is little doubt but that the subject of Military Reform must attract considerable interest in the coming Session, even though the last months of the expiring Parliament will doubtless be mainly devoted by the Members to preparing characters for themselves, for use on the hustings already looming in the near future. Doubtless also Financial Reform will be loudly paraded by Ministers as the best card left them, now that their pack is so nearly played out.

But it is not difficult to see that the union of Army Reform and Financial Reform or Retrenchment will not be an easy one, nor wholly unattended with the usual incompatibility of such forced unions. The great question of Army Reform—the abolition

of the Purchase System—must await a new Parliament. It is a matter too vast in all its bearings to be grappled with by an expiring House. That and its sister question of Double Government,—Parliamentary through the War Minister, and Prerogative through the Commander-in-Chief,—must "bide a wee."

Other Military questions, secondary indeed to these very large ones, but of a good deal of importance in themselves, will, however, engage the attention of the House during the Session of this year. These are points relating directly to the Administration of the Army; and first of all these must be ranged the question of the enormous machine, the unwieldy and overgrown machine, in Pall Mall. The organization of the War Office itself really calls for immediate attention. The steps recently taken to infuse new blood into the decrepit body will tend rather to aggravate the disease—plethora—from which that body already suffers. Unless some substantial reductions are made, and that in time for this year's Estimates, the enormous cost of the War Office will form a very uncomfortable item of hustings' declamation and hustings' pledges.

It is well known that the Officials in Pall Mall are so numerous, that literally it is impossible for them to move without treading on each others' toes; and the confusion which many persons, capable of form-

ing a sound judgment on the matter, predict as inevitable, in case of a war breaking out, is mainly the result of the overcrowded condition of the Upper Appointments in the War Office. Nor is it possible to avoid the conclusion, that with so many Major-Generals filling all the highest posts in Pall Mall, it cannot be very necessary to have as many more Major-Generals a few hundred yards off to be controlled by them. When the fight—the great battle of Double Government—does come on, as come it will some fine day, the Military Chiefs at the Horse Guards, who now so greatly rejoice that the Military Element has got so firm a footing in the Civil Departments at Pall Mall, may then find that the Country thinks that two Military bodies are not absolutely necessary in one System of Administration, and may desire to dispense altogether with the Staff at the Horse Guards.

II.

The Civil Check of the War Office over the Horse Guards.

(March 21, 1868.)

One would have thought that the important question of the Double Government of the Army might

perhaps be shelved over this Session. But the Government—that is to say, the Authorities at the War Office—would seem to be anxious to raise the question at once, judging from the manner in which the Estimates just laid before Parliament blazon forth the *Military* status of so many of the Officials at the *Civil* Department in Pall Mall.

It appears by the Estimates, taken in connection with the *Army List* published "by authority," that the permanent Under Secretary-of-State is a Lieutenant-General; the Controller-in-Chief is a Major-General, as is also his Assistant; the Parliamentary Under-Secretary is a Colonel; the Military Assistant a Colonel; the Compiler of Statistics a Major; besides a host of Heads of Departments, Admirals, Generals, Colonels, Captains, *et hoc genus omne.*

Now this is a goodly array of Military men for a Civil Office of Civil Control. But what does this Office control, or rather whom is it supposed, by the theory of our Constitution, to control? *Answer*—the Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief.

But how can any Army Officers be properly employed in controlling the Military head of the Army—in fact, in controlling their own Commander?

It is quite comprehensible, and wholly in unison with the spirit and intention of the Constitution of this Country, that a Civilian, or a body of Civilian Officers, should control the very highest Military Authority, because the Civil Power is supreme in this

land—the Military Power is its servant in every way, existing merely on sufferance, annually renewed in the most formal manner. The Mutiny Act, by which alone it is legalized, rehearses annually the preamble, "Whereas the raising or keeping a Standing Army within the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in time of Peace, unless it be with the consent of Parliament, is against Law."

It is thus plain that the Control of the Commander-in-Chief of the Army by Civilians is formal and Constitutional. But surely the Control of this great Military Officer by his own subordinate Officers is anomalous, and absurd in theory, and, what is more, *impossible in practice;* and it, therefore, follows, of necessity, not by any question of whether this Under Secretary is hard-working, or that Controller-in-Chief clear-headed, but of the necessity of the case that the Control of the War Office, bristling with Military men, over the Commander-in-Chief, is a fiction, a delusion, and a snare.

But unfortunately it is a very expensive fiction; and it is to be hoped that some real Army Reformer in the House will call the attention of Parliament to the question of whether it is necessary to pay enormous sums for the Control of the Army, when that Control is inevitably merely nominal, and really mischievous, as removing the responsibility from the actual working head to the nominal controlling head.

Let the Commander-in-Chief be really the head of the Army, restricted only in what he does by the force of Public Opinion; or else let Parliament re-assert her right to the Civil Control over the Army, abolishing all the Military powers at the War Office, and restoring, once more, the old Constitutional check of Civil *Employés* carrying out the orders of the Civil Power.

III.

The Necessity for Increased Representation of the War Office in the House of Commons, and for the Restoration of the Civil Element in the War Office.

(May 23, 1868.)

If Military Reform is to be carried out effectively, it must be so by the only way in which any effective Reforms are ever carried out—from without. The Military Element will never, can never, reform the Military machine; and it becomes, therefore, of imperative importance that the Office, viz. that of the War Minister, which stands, by the Constitution, between the "Faithful Commons" and the Army, should be in the first place in close and full accord with the House, and in the second place directed by the Civil Element.

Much remains to be done before either of these requisites is obtained.

In the first place, as regards the close and full connection between the House of Commons and the War Office. The amalgamation of the various Offices,—which up to 1856 shared among them the Military Administration, and represented that Administration in the House of Commons by some four or five responsible Ministers,—reduced the Military Representation on the Ministerial Bench to one person in each House. The Secretary of State for War in one House, and the Under-Secretary in the other, took the places, and bore upon their overburdened shoulders the functions, of the Secretary of State and Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Secretary-at-War, the Master-General of the Ordnance, and the Secretary of the Treasury. Six, sometimes seven voices were thus reduced to two.

Whether the individuals representing the Military Department in Parliament of late years have had the weight and influence that their predecessors formerly possessed need not now be considered. It is enough to observe that, while our Forces and their cost have increased largely, their representation in Parliament has been reduced two-thirds.

A practical remedy suggests itself at once, without burdening the Public Purse with the creation of any new highly paid Office, a course too often and too readily adopted now-a-days to meet the demands for

Military Reforms, when they can no longer be resisted. The remedy is this :—In the House of Lords, where so few Military questions ever arise, and where there are so many experienced Military men ready to solve them, the Leader of the House might be charged with the duty of answering, on behalf of the Government, all Military questions put by noble Lords; while in the House of Commons the very heavy duties of moving and carrying the Army Estimates, and of answering the incessant questions raised on Army matters by the "Popular Branch" of the Legislature, should be shared between the Secretary of State for War and his Parliamentary Under-Secretary, both of whom should, with this object, be Members of the Lower House.

The plea now constantly and unavoidably urged by the over-taxed Minister for War in the Lower House, that he really cannot answer such minute points, that he really cannot be responsible for such multifarious details, need then no longer be accepted. Under the present system personal responsibility becomes impossible, and all real responsibility is thus frittered away. With two Ministerial Officers in constant contact with the House of Commons, a very much fuller and closer relation might fairly, and would actually, be established.

The second point to be secured is that the War Department shall be really and effectually directed by the Civil rather than by the Military Element.

A few words must suffice on this subject at present; but they should, therefore, be all the more distinct and unmistakable.

Any attempt on the part of the present Ministry to increase,—in the re-organization of the War Office now daily expected with reference to the long-suspended vote on Army Administration,—any attempt to increase the Military influence at Pall Mall will meet with such determined opposition, if not in this expiring Parliament, yet certainly in its immediate successor, that the short-sighted authors of such increased Military ascendancy will have reason sorely to repent of their having availed themselves of the temporary weakness of the Civil Government to reap a triumph that will certainly be worse to them ultimately than a defeat.

The present organization of the War Office includes three Under-Secretaries and one Assistant Under-Secretary. The three Under-Secretaries are at this moment all of them Military Officers—two Generals and a Colonel—the subordinates of the Commander-in-Chief, whom they are appointed to control. The senior Civilian under the Minister is the Assistant Under-Secretary of State. It is to the position, the power, the independent functions of this Officer that the House of Commons and the Public look and must look for the keeping alive, even in its feeble and attenuated flame, of the light of Civil Control; and the Secretary of State will

make a grievous error, and one that must soon rebound with a disagreeable reaction, if he allows the new organization to lower in a single point the position and power of this last refuge of the Civil Element.

"If they won't give us the Bishoprics," exclaim the 'Three Clerks' in a well-known work of fiction, "they might at least leave us the Deaneries." "If they fill up the whole three Under-Secretaryships with Soldiers, at least let the senior Civilian, the Assistant Under-Secretary, have some power for good!"

It is not in the remotest degree intended to impute to the three distinguished Officers, now monopolizing the posts of Under-Secretaries, any dishonourable or unworthy conduct in the discharge of their high duties; but human nature is human nature, and the Control of a subordinate over his Commander is naturally not of the highest efficiency. John Bull, in all matters of courtesy and social intercourse, acts fully on the principle of honour among honourable men; but in matters of business, he is apt to ask for good security—substantial guarantees; and in the conduct of Public affairs he is entitled to expect that Military functions shall be performed by Military men, and Civil functions by Civilians.

IV.

Military Blunders by Military Administrators.

(April 18, 1868.)

Some remarks appeared in these columns a few weeks back on the prevalence of the Military Element in the Civil Office of the Secretary of State for War, pointing out the anomaly of subordinate Officers controlling or commanding their own Commanders.

The correctness of the arguments have been everywhere admitted; but it has been replied that such anomalies must be disregarded in practice, when the advantages to the State are manifest; and that it is manifest that great advantages are obtained by the valuable experience of Military officers in conducting the business at the War Office in a thousand details in which Civilian Clerks, not having actual Military experience, would lead their Chief into innumerable blunders.

The events of the past week afford all the comment that is required to meet this reply. The extraordinary blunder that has disarranged, if not marred, all the plans of the great Volunteer Review at Portsmouth was made by no Civilian Clerk. The omission to calculate the time required for moving a given body of men over a given distance was the omission of a high Military power. We cannot say whether the mistake was made by the Colonel, the

late Inspector-General of Volunteers, who has been relieved, or by the Major-General, who has relieved him; but by the old or by the new Military Officer "*Commanding*" the Reserve Forces, as the Secretary of State has recently termed it, were the arrangements made; and in spite of experience, in spite of personal acquaintance with troops, marches, and movements, a Military Officer is, beyond question, the author of the recent "fiasco" in regard to the Military movements of the Volunteer Regiments at Portsmouth, which, mitigated as it has been by subsequent modifications, has sufficiently scandalized all the warmest supporters of Military organization.

Let the Public, then, take heart, and let them stand true to their principles, putting aside all specious arguments as to none but Military men having any knowledge of Military affairs; and let it be admitted—and, when admitted, let it be acted upon—that in all matters of Government, the State,—that is to say, the Civil Power—must be supreme; unless we are prepared to reverse all the principles of our Constitution, and to make our Standing Army a standing menace to the liberties of the Country; for there is no doubt whatever that no less an issue is involved ultimately in the admission of Military powers into the Control of the Civil Offices that should control the Army.

V.

The War in Abyssinia.

(February 8, 1868.)

It is not very pleasant, we freely admit, to have to pay an extra income-tax, especially on our now enormous profits, for the pleasure of chastising King Theodore; but there is generally a compensation clause in every measure, and it is certain that the Abyssinian Expedition will have the double advantage—firstly, of keeping in practice the delicate machinery of an Army which in India may one day be called upon for heavier and sterner warfare than among the Magdalenes of Abyssinia; and secondly, of pointing out clearly the joints in our harness, the weak points, and the *frictional* parts of our machinery. Such teaching and such experience must be valuable at all times, unless neglected and ignored, which, with the light thrown upon all the details of the progress of the Expedition by "Our Own Correspondent" in the Daily papers, is not likely to be the case now-a-days. But they are especially valuable at this moment, when attention is so strongly directed at home to this very subject—the working of our various and too numerous Military Departments.

The theory of this question has long been anxiously debated at the big Office in Pall Mall. Able Admi-

nistrators have reported on the subject; able Administrators are now employed to put into life and action the results of their considerations; and to them we would point out the advantage to be derived by a careful study of the operations now being carried on in Abyssinia. On the shores of Africa, and on the march inland, the two Systems—that of the Indian Army and that of the British Army—are brought into close contact and daily comparison. It is true that for years past the Imperial and the Indian Armies have been amalgamated, in name at least, but in Systems, not at all. In the Expedition against the Abyssinian Royal Gaoler, the two Systems meet face to face, and the extremes of time seem to meet also. The elephant that took part in the Indian wars of Alexander is there, alongside the iron horse of Stephenson; the Indian dhooly jostles the Woolwich ambulance; and the saddle that has sufficed for the use of the Arab for a thousand years is pitted in competition with the latest improvement devised in the Inventors' Room at Pall Mall.

Surely there is good "learning"—good "practice" to be got out of these coalitions by diligence and study; and we hope that the new Controller-in-Chief at the War Office will thoroughly "improve the occasion;" and, sifting out the corn from the chaff, the practical from the obstructive, the useful from the ornamental, will make us all feel that our "extra twopence" has not only enabled us to vindi-

cate our honour, and to increase our prestige in the East and in the West, but has also afforded a good field of observation at the right moment to right good observers.

VI.

The Example of Austria.

(February 15, 1868.)

There is no penitent, they say, like a reformed rake; and certainly the rapid pace at which Austria —the paternal, the despotic—is advancing in Constitutionalism is surprising and wholly incomprehensible, except on this theory.

But the latest step in this direction is one that cannot but attract the earnest attention of our Military Reformers. Under the old *régime* the Emperor of Austria was the head of the Austrian Army, and directed it through his General Adjutant, the Obercommando. This Officer, therefore, holds, or rather held, the position filled in this Country by the Commander-in-Chief. But Austria, having in her recent fit of Constitutionalism, appointed a Constitutional Minister for War, a very short space of time has sufficed to satisfy her politicians that two such

Powers could not co-exist as a Minister of War responsible to the Nation for the affairs of the Army, and a Commander-in-Chief responsible to the Crown for the same.

The Double Government only required to be seen in work by this practical people,—really in earnest on Army matters since those little mishaps in Bohemia,—to be utterly condemned; and the news comes from Vienna that the post of Obercommando is to be forthwith abolished, amidst the rejoicings of the Constitutional party; the Royal Duke, until now Commander-in-Chief, becoming the Inspector-General of the Austrian army under the orders of the Minister of War.

"Mutato nomine, de te
Fabula narratur!"

The parallelism between our System and that lately condemned in Austria is one that must strike every one without our being at the pains to point it out. We Britishers, it is true, have had no Sadowa to sharpen our ideas on Army organization, and we are a patient, long-enduring, slow-moving race. Nevertheless, it is a good deal more than probable that the recent doings in Austria will attract much attention in the coming Session, and may serve to place the question of the Double Government of the Army in the first rank in point of time, as it undoubtedly is in point of importance, of the forthcoming measures of Military Reform.

VII.

The Movements of Troops.

(March 7, 1868.)

At a time when the Expedition to Abyssinia is assuming the gigantic proportions which we have always assigned to it, and involving the Country in an expenditure that will be little short of Ten millions sterling, it behoves the Government to practise economy wherever practicable, and it is not, therefore, without dismay, that we learn from the Military papers that some thirty Regiments are about to pass through the "Aldershot course of training."

Now this involves an amount of expense in the removal of Troops which would alarm any Military economist, could the details be actually ascertained. At the extravagantly high rates paid to the Railway Companies for the conveyance of Troops, five hundred pounds a Regiment is the lowest estimate at which, on an average, a Corps can be removed from its Station to Aldershot and back; so that, at least £15,000 will be expended for the travelling expenses of these Regiments to their training quarters. This is a good round sum to pay for the somewhat questionable advantages of a summer sojourn in the Camp; and raises the question whether due supervision exists over the Movements of Troops as regards the expense attending them. At pre-

sent, the Commander-in-Chief has the uncontrolled power of moving Troops within the limits of the United Kingdom, and has not to consult the Secretary of State before incurring such expenses. Formerly the orders for changing Stations proceeded directly from the Secretary at War; but when the lamentable fiction of the universal Control of the War Minister was adopted, the consequent fiction that the Military Departments were under his Control, and might, therefore, be intrusted with the expenditure of public money, was unhappily adopted too, and it is as Agent, as it were, of the finance head of the Army, but, really, as Officer of the executive head, that the Quartermaster-General is empowered to move Troops, without the previous sanction of the War Office, to an extent, and at a cost that would, if known, positively terrify those who still believe that the Parliamentary Commander-in-Chief of the Army—the War Minister—has any efficient Control over the most reckless and extravagant expenditure.

VIII.

The Recruiting of the Army.

(February 22, 1868.)

While waiting with its usual exemplary patience

for the larger and more important measures of Military Reform, the public would be glad to see some minor matters of organization at once put on a better footing. Foremost among these stands the System for Recruiting the Army.

The Report of the Royal Commission on Army Recruiting two years ago has been attended with a good many improvements in the Recruiting Service; and among others, the appointment of an Officer, whose whole duties are confined to the direction and control of the Recruiting for the Army. The Inspector-General of Recruiting performs, and with marked success and efficiency—as shown by the fact that the Army is now fully supplied with men—the duties which, until lately, were regarded as sufficiently looked after by an Assistant Adjutant-General, already overburdened with other work. But less than a twelvemonth's experience of the working of the new appointment has shown the advisability, not to say the necessity, of transferring altogether from the Horse Guards to the Secretary of State's Office, the Department of the Inspector-General of Recruiting.

The duty of obtaining out of the Civil population the materials for the Army is one affecting, in so many delicate points, the liberty and Civil rights of the subject, that it is manifest that such duty appertains of right to a Civil Minister rather than to the Military Authorities. A Civil Board—the Com-

missioners of Chelsea Hospital—carry out the duty of returning the worn-out soldier back to the ranks of Civil life; and in like manner the duty of collecting the civilians who are willing to become soldiers should rest with a Civil Officer. So soon as the men are raised and enrolled in the ranks of the Army, they should be handed over to the Adjutant-General, as representing the Commander-in-Chief. But, up to the point when they are actually in the Military Service of the Country, the raising, collecting, and enrolling Civilians for Army duty should be vested in the Civil Minister. And the sooner arrangements are made for transferring to the War Office the Department of the Inspector-General of Recruiting, the better it will be for the Service.

IX.

The New Rules for the Recruiting Service.

(November 30, 1867.)

SCENE.—*The Parlour of the Marquis of Granby Public-house. Sergeant Pitchit Strong and Corporal Joseph Longbow are seen spelling over a recent Horse Guards Memorandum.*

SERGEANT STRONG (*loq.*).—I can't make it out at all! How can the 'thorities expect us to get the Recruits they want, when they go and tell the chaps

the real state of the case. (*Reads.*) "A soldier from his first joining the Army receives, besides his lodging, food, and clothing, a weekly sum quite at his own disposal of two-and-sixpence or more." Half-a-crown a week, indeed! why, I always tell 'em they'll get that much a *day*, and even then it costs me—take 'em all round—seven pints and a half of beer apiece to hook 'em.

CORPORAL LONGBOW.—I feel it's all up with us, Sergeant, and we'd better go back to our Regiment. As for making any more money here in nabbing recruits, that's all over now. I remember when I was 'listed, the Sergeant told me I'd have my shilling a day to put in my pocket. When I found out that I only got a penny a day, I felt mad at the way I was took in, and could a'most have murdered the man that trapped me. But, however, I got over it in time, and now that I'm a recruiter myself, somehow I don't think it worth while to explain to the boys that the shilling's only given 'em to be took away again in stoppages. Ha! ha!

SERGEANT STRONG (*appreciating the joke*).—Ha! ha! ha! and quite right too. It ain't our places to expose the frauds of our betters, is it? And we're quite reasonable-like compared to what Recruiters used to be. Why, I remember my respected father, how he used to make us young 'uns at home laugh at the tales he told the chawbacons. He used to laugh himself when he told us how he picked up

fifty men for the 160th Foot in 1815. The Regiment was under orders for India, and he got the country lads to 'list by telling them what lots of pay they'd get in India, with blackies to do all their work. But then Boney turned up all of a sudden, and the Regiment was ordered off to Belgium. And as they was a-toiling along through the rain and the mud atween Brussels and Waterloo, governor heard one of the lads say to another, "Dang it, Jim, this is what they calls five shillings a day and a nigger to wait on you!"

Corporal Longbow.—That's not bad; but your governor couldn't have known they was going to fight Boney, could he? There's no amount of gammon that those country chaps won't swallow. I was out for the Long-tailed Cattle Corps (as we used to call the Land Transport Corps) in '55, and the boys were rather backward in coming forward, as you may say. "What shall we get to eat in the Crymear?" says one. "What shall we have to do there?" says another. "Well, boys," says I, "as for eating, you'll have a comfortable rasher of bacon every morning with your hot rolls and coffee, (I didn't say nothing about the coffee being green—I'm not *that* colour,) and you'll get the best of food for dinner and supper, with a slice of buttered toast with your tea. And nothing to do all day but just amuse yourselves a-fishing in the beautiful rivers, that run through that lovely country, where the

grapes grow out in the fields." Blest if they didn't bite at that, and not only 'listed by dozens, but lots of 'em took out their fishing-rods with them to Ballyclaver. "What have you got there, men?" says the Officer as they landed. "Fishing-rods, your honour," says one. "Sure and didn't the gemman that 'listed us say we'd have little to do here but just fish all day long, and enjoy ourselves." I needn't tell you that the rods was all took away and broken up for firewood before long, and glad too they were to get a bit of warmth out of them out there in the snow. But I heard afterwards from the Sergeants that it was lucky that I didn't happen to be out there too, when the men came to find out what they'd got to do, and what they'd got to eat.

Sergeant Strong.—Ah, ah! If they'd too much of one, they'd too little of t'other, so that made it all square. But just look here, what this here Horse Guards Mem. says about promotion. (*Reads.*) "If the soldier should qualify himself, he will be before long promoted." That's bosh! I says; I never knew one of these country clodhoppers promoted under a dozen years, except one, and he was promoted not because he was so *long* in the service, but because he was so *fat*. It's a fact 'pon my oath! He was a stupid good-natured chap, no use anywhere; but he had grown that fat, a-swilling mutton broth 365 days in the year, that there wasn't a sentry-box in

the garrison would hold him; so the Colonel made him a corporal, and that way got him off guards.

Corporal Longbow.—Well, it ain't many that get fat on soldiering! However, we must try and get over this here cussed Memorandum as best we can. You see there ain't one in twenty of these clod-hoppers who can read: so we'll get into the way of *reading it to them*, and I think we know the old tale by heart well enough to read *that* out to 'em instead of this poor stuff! There's a lout just come into the bar. He's two-thirds tipsy already, so I dare say another pint of the Marquis of Granby's pick-'em-ups, as the governor here calls his collected heel-taps, will do the job. A-doo. (*Exit to bar.*)

But it was not *a do*, for the clodhopper had *smarted* already, and was proof against Mr. Joseph Longbow's persuasions.

"*He's* not for Joseph," muttered Sergeant Pitchit Strong, as he resumed, much disquieted in spirit, his study of the Adjutant-General's sensible and business-like Memorandum, "On the Advantages obtainable by Young Men who faithfully serve Her Majesty as Soldiers."

X.

Sir John Pakington's Speech on Moving the Estimates (1868).

(April 4, 1868.)

The speech of the Right Hon. Baronet, the Secretary of State for War, when moving the Army Estimates on Monday week, was so unsatisfactory both in the many matters of Army mismanagement that he confessed to, and in the still more numerous points of disorganization which he vainly endeavoured to defend, that we are at a loss what subject to discuss first; and indeed scarcely know whether the faults of our Military Administration are not so numerous and so inherent, as to defy all useful criticism, and to baffle the hopes of the most sanguine Reformer.

The baneful System of Purchase, the illiberal System of Retirement in the Non-purchase Corps, the mysterious operations of the Reserve Fund, the want of organization in the War Office and Head Quarter Offices, the absence of all unity of purpose in the great Manufacturing Departments at Woolwich, the vain endeavour to put the Auxiliary, or—as now far less appropriately termed—the Reserve Forces, under one Command, the absence of any adequate Armament for our new Fortifications, the impossibility of determining what is the best model

for Small Arms, and, high above all, the anomaly of the Double Government of the Army; all these terrible defects were either weakly admitted by the Secretary of State, or still more weakly denied.

Where then shall Military Reform commence? Where shall it make the first breach in the triple lines of defence thrown up by interest, by favouritism, and by incompetence?

Our own conviction—and every day and every public discussion increase that conviction—is that the Double Government is the starting-point of all, or nearly all, these abuses, failures, and weaknesses. The contest between the Civil Element and the Military Element must and will continue, until one or the other succumbs. And so long as it continues, so long will attention be drawn away from internal abuses and failures, which a single governing head would not take very long to mitigate or remove. At present the Military Element seems to be greatly in the ascendant; but we have too much confidence in the strength of the principle of our Constitution to doubt but that the Civil Element will ultimately assert its pre-eminence. It may be that the present undue preponderance is fated to produce that violent reaction which may accomplish the crisis, and in its rebound enable the Civil Element to sweep away at once and for ever all pretensions of the Military to share in the supreme direction of Army matters.

One subject, and one subject only, of the many Army defects that are admitted to exist, at all approaches in importance the above question of Army Government; and that is the System of Army Purchase.

This is a very difficult subject. The System undoubtedly has its advantages as well as disadvantages. The double difficulty of the subject is, first to decide whether the latter so decidedly preponderate over the former as to render it advisable to alter the existing system; and secondly, if the System is to be abolished, how it is to be done. Our opinion is, first, that its abuses, if not more weighty than its advantages, are certainly more apparent to the outside observer; and, secondly, that the difficulties of arriving at a judicious and deliberate solution of the matter are so great, that the result will be, and that before long, that a rough and ready mode of dealing with the System will be adopted, in which deliberation and judgment will have little part, and in which the violence done to existing rights will be severe, but will be met by an extravagant grant of compensation, which will seriously trench upon the Public Purse.

If we might venture to advise her Majesty's Government, we would recommend that such a catastrophe should be averted, or at any rate softened off, by an immediate adoption of a partial measure of Abolition. It has often been urged that,

without any great expenditure of public money, Purchase above the rank of Captain might be abolished, and the step to a Majority or Lieutenant-Colonelcy be given by seniority or selection. This measure, we think, would be accepted by the Country as a fair instalment, and might stave off the pressure for any larger or more complete measure, for such a period as would give time for a deliberate judgment to be arrived at in the matter.

XI.

The Retirement Scheme for the Ordnance Corps.

(April 11, 1868.)

To follow the order of Military failures in effective organization, as indicated in the speech of the Secretary of State for War on moving the Army Estimates, it is now necessary to consider the question of retarded promotion in the Scientific Branches of the Service, which threatens before long to bring to a deadlock those very important Corps, the Royal Artillery and the Royal Engineers.

The large increases in these Corps, in consequence of the increased importance attached to Gunnery in modern warfare, have, since the date of the Crimean War, introduced into the Service such numbers of

Officers, all of nearly the same age, that the prospects of promotion to some three-fourths of them are literally annihilated.

To remedy, or rather to palliate, this state of things, it has been proposed, by a Committee of the House of Commons, to make Retirement at the age of sixty *compulsory*, and to *allow* Retirements at lower rates of Pension to all Officers of twenty-two years' service and upwards.

The first proposal is *unobjectionable*, and will go far to secure a fair flow of promotion throughout the Corps; but the second proposal is altogether fraught with the greatest danger, for it is certain that it will be, as a rule, the most active-minded, the most intelligent, and the most efficient Officers who will avail themselves of retiring early from the Service; men who know that, with their activity of mind and body, they can go into Civil life, carrying with them their Army Pension to secure them from want, while they are establishing themselves in lucrative employments, for which their twenty years' experience and discipline in Military life will so thoroughly fit them. While the drones, the indifferent, and mediocre men will hang on, conscious that in the Army they are drawing more pay than they could possibly hope for in the contests and struggles of Civil life, and contented to sleep away their years in the enjoyment of the more rapid promotion created by the premature flight of all the better men in the Corps.

The permission to retire after twenty years' service will thus deprive the Service of the best men at their best time, at a period of their service when the benefits of experience have not begun to be diminished by any commencing drawbacks of age, and when their active handling of their duties will be the best instruction to the younger Officers just entering the Service. Nothing can possibly tend more to lower the *esprit* and *élan* of the Corps than the loss in their prime of their prime men. It would—

> "Take the good, too good with them to stay,
> And leave the bad, too bad to go away."

In lieu of this dangerous proposal, the *compulsory* Retirement at sixty should be supplemented with permissive Retirement at fifty-five, on the same or nearly the same Pension, and with a further permission to retire at fifty, at three-fourths of the highest rate of Pension.

Thus no Retirements on an average would be admissible under thirty years' service, and the tendency to retire would be completely changed; for the active in mind and body would be those that would go on to sixty years of age, while the inefficient would be those who would take their good Pensions and go early.

It is to be hoped that the Government will look at the question on higher grounds than mere pounds, shillings, and pence; as a question for the Administrator (if there is one in the War Office) rather

than for the "Actuary" to whom it has been referred; the former may admit into his calculations the rather important item of *efficiency*, while the latter may not do so; and most certainly it will be admitted by all reasonable men, that an efficient organization of the Scientific Corps of the Army—cost what it will—will be well worth the cost; while an inefficient organization, however cheap, will be an unalloyed waste of Public Money.

XII.

The Reserve Fund.

(May 2, 1868.)

On to the ancient evil stock of the Army Purchase System, the War Department has grafted the modern but monstrous excrescence of the "Reserve Fund."

The Reserve Fund is, and always has been, a mystery to the million. Parliament has long been endeavouring to get some distinct notion of what it is, and to what uses it is applied. A Select Committee of the House has been appointed to examine the subject. It has already sat for two years, but has not yet been able to agree upon a distinct description or definition of this monstrous *lusus naturalis*, or rather *officialis*.

The Reserve Fund may be described shortly thus: Whereas it is considered by very many persons, who have carefully studied the organization of our Army, that there is much evil in the System which allows an Officer to buy a Commission and sell it again, the Reserve Fund is an institution founded for the purpose of enabling an Officer to sell a Commission which he *never* bought; in fact, not to recover the money he had laid out, but actually to sell for money an appointment in the Public Service for which he never gave a penny—in other words, to make a profit out of the sale of his Public Appointment.

It is quite unnecessary to cite the Acts of Parliament which make it penal to buy or sell any *Civil* Office or Appointment under the Crown; but let the fact be noted, in order to mark distinctly the difference in every point which distinguishes the Civil Service from the Military, and which adds another item to the claim of the Civil power to control the Military.

After having, in the first place, congratulated itself that the places in the Civil Service are not matters of purchase and sale, in the second place let the British Public ask the warmest supporters of Purchase in the Army, whether they would venture to propose that their pet System should be extended to Civil Appointments; and, in the third place, whether the machinery, by which the War Department is enabled to intensify all the evils of the Army Purchase

System by means of the Reserve Fund, should be allowed to continue.

An instance, taken at random, will serve to illustrate the working of the Reserve Fund. Mr. Jonas de Montmorency, having good interest at the Horse Guards, obtained, fifteen years ago, his Ensigncy in the 200th Foot for nothing—"without Purchase," as it is termed at the War Office, where "by Purchase" is considered to be the "regular thing." He served for six years as Ensign, and then, by a death vacancy in the Regiment, obtained his Lieutenancy. In four years' time, by an augmentation in the Regiment, he got "his Company," that is, became a Captain without having paid a penny for his Commissions. But though he has never paid, he can receive; though he has never bought, he can sell. How? By means of the Reserve Fund.

Captain Jonas de Montmorency applies to sell a Captain's Commission. "Who'll buy, who'll buy?" The Secretary of State for War steps forward, with the Reserve Fund in his pocket, and says, "I'll buy. You have served fifteen years, seven of them at the not unpleasant Stations of Malta and Canada, so I will give you £1,100 for your Commission, £50 a year for each year's service at home, and £100 a year for each year's service abroad."

Captain Jonas, instead of going on with the Service and rising to the higher grades of the Regiment, with all the experience he has gained as a Subaltern,

takes his £1,100 and "cuts it"—that is abandons his profession at the age of 33, in the prime of life; while the Reserve Fund sells his Commission for £1,800 to a raw Lieutenant, and still rawer Ensign, and so on.

The Reserve Fund intensifies all the evils of the Purchase System in the Army. Its supporters may talk of the Advantages the System secures in getting men to the command of their Regiments in the prime of life, and of bringing into command men of wealth, who can keep up the prestige of the Corps for brilliant hospitality and first-rate Bands; but all must admit that it tends to make the great majority of Officers disinclined to look upon the Army as their profession, and leads them to regard it rather as a position in which to spend a few years pleasantly and in good society. Need any one be surprised, therefore, in the judgment passed on the English Officers by their gallant Allies in the Crimea, that they had no knowledge of the every-day duties of their profession,—no education as Officers?

But to leaven this lump—to give ballast to this lightly-rigged barque,—there are admitted into the Army, from time to time, young men not of large fortune, who, coming in "without Purchase," must look to advancement in their profession by other means than by laying out large sums of money—young men, in short, who must, by diligence and study, fit themselves for Army Service.

Useful, indeed, is this class of Officers in the Army; —and by the machinery of the Reserve Fund the Government labours constantly, in its high administrative wisdom, and labours successfully, to get rid of them as fast as it can, by enabling them to sell, though they never bought, and by inducing them to accept large sums of public money on the sole condition that they should cease to serve the Public.

It is thus that the operation of the Reserve Fund intensifies the evils of the Purchase System, taking away all that is left of permanency among the Officers of the Line, and rendering them all alike shifting, changing, and unstable—holding their profession in their hands, ready to be turned into money at any time as easily as a Bank of England Note—and running unhesitatingly into debt, with the feeling that if their "financial relations" do press them, they have the value of their commission which they can at once realize. It is an established fact that the condition of three-fourths of the officers of the Line is indebtedness; and it is equally certain that the one great incentive thereto is the knowledge that, let the worst come to the worst, they can always sell their Commission.

Whether the Purchase System in the Army is abolished, or is modified, or is retained unchanged, in any case its monstrous adjunct, the Reserve Fund, will surely be totally abolished as soon as the Report

of the Parliamentary Committee shall have let in a little light on the subject.

XIII.

The Duties of the Controller-in-Chief.

(January 25, 1868.)

When the leading, or too often the mis-leading, Journal of the day heads its description of the War Office with the title "An Augæan Stable," it greatly exaggerates the faults of that much-abused Establishment.

That the War Department is overgrown in size, and over-governed in the number of its higher appointments, we are quite aware; but that any *filth* or *corruption* will be found pervading it after the most searching inquiry into its System we do not believe; which being so, the title labelled by the 'Times' on to its extract from a much better-informed paper appears to be fitter for the sensational heading of certain sensational papers than for the columns of a respectable Journal.

The task allotted to the Military Hercules recently sent to Pall Mall is not to cleanse out any "Augæan Stable," but the harder task of wrestling with the many-headed Hydra of Departmentalism.

This is the campaign that must inaugurate the reign of King Stork, if his kingdom is to be any better than the present reign of King Log. Reformation, Concentration, Organization,—such must be his War Cries; and the Director-General of this, and the Inspector-General of that, and the Principal-in-Chief of the other—these are the separate, independent, and uncombined Elements which the new Regenerator has to weld into one homogeneous united mass. Transports, Stores, Armaments, Weapons, Medical "fixings," Works, Fortifications, Barracks, Clothing, Rations of food for man and beast,—each now ordered, controlled, and supplied by an independent petty Monarch,—must be "unificated," consolidated, and put under one supreme Control. For this task, Herculean though it be, we are quite confident that the new Controller-in-Chief is admirably adapted; and it is one, in its importance with regard to efficiency and economy, well worthy of so distinguished an Administrator as Sir Henry Storks.

"Nec *Hero* intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus."

XIV.

The War Office and the Controller-in-Chief.

(June 6, 1868.)

There seems only too much reason to fear that

the "Authorities" at Pall Mall have come to a final decision in the matter of the organization of the War Department, which in effect crushes, *for the time*, the whole Civil check over Military expenditure, which has existed in the British Constitution from the first institution of a Standing Army.

The extravagant demands of the new Controller-in-Chief that his arrangements, his estimates, his expenditure, should not be checked or questioned by any financial co-ordinate Authority have, it is reported, been most unwisely, most fatally, acceded to by the Government; and the whole financial functions of the nominally responsible Minister have been abdicated by him in favour of an irresponsible, subordinate Officer,—subordinate at least in name, but in reality paramount in authority, and not responsible to any one.

The gradual decadence of the financial Control over the Army may be traced in a very few sentences; and parallel with such decay of Control may be very clearly seen, in figures that cannot deceive, and that cannot be explained away by any other cause, the enormous increase of the annual Army Expenditure.

Before the amalgamation of the various Army Offices under a Minister of War, the Secretary at War was the Financial Officer who, preparing the Army Estimates, and moving and explaining them in the House of Commons, was personally respon-

sible to the House and to the Country for due economy and correct expenditure in Army matters. This was an actual, real responsibility; and constantly lowered Estimates were the actual and natural result.

When the amalgamation took place, and function after function was heaped upon the new Minister, the special duties of Financial Control—the internal portion of the old Secretary at War's financial duties—were vested in an Under-Secretary of State for War. His position on an equal platform with the Military Under Secretary gave him, of course, a counterbalancing power against the natural tendency of the Military Official to spend excessive sums on Military Services. The two Officers stood equally near to the Minister; from the one he heard the Military and professional arguments for this or that proposed Service—from the other he heard the Financial objections or modifications that could be urged in the interests of economy.

Here was some glimmering of organization, check, and counterpoise.

The civil Under-Secretary died in 1862. "*Le Roi est mort, Vive le Roi!*" A true saying under many circumstances, but not when there are two *Rois* side by side. Then the living *Roi* is apt to discover that he does not require any successor to the other *Roi*, any rival or counterpoise. And so it came to pass. When Sir Benjamin Hawes, the Civil

Under-Secretary, died in 1862, the then Minister of War was told by the Military Under-Secretary that he would really be very economical, that by increasing his salary from £1500 to £2000 a year he would feel all the responsibility of saving money in everything else, and that no successor to Sir Benjamin Hawes need be appointed, but that his Financial duties might be allotted to an *Assistant* Under-Secretary.

In an evil hour the Minister of War consented to this arrangement. Instantly the whole balance of power was gone! The Civil Element was degraded a step—the Military Element was left in sole possession of the field.

The new Financial Officer strove "with all his might and main" to make his Financial Control effective and real, but in vain; all his talents, which are admitted even by Military men, were crippled for want of position. He was inferior, and could only be heard *through* his superior; and, of course, all his efforts at economy were counteracted; all his endeavours to serve the public faithfully were attributed to "bad temper," "disagreeable interference," and so on; and thus the Financial light was dimmed and concealed, and could only make itself visible in occasional cases, when the Military proceedings became "really too bad."

Broken, degraded, inferior in position, now for the *coup de grâce* in the true Military style! Nor

was it long before it was deemed by the Military Powers that the time was come when an effort might be made for a final destruction of the Civil Financial check altogether; and this has been done. The Controller-in-Chief has been appointed to absorb all the Heads of the Executive and Supply Branches—the Heads of the Store Branch, the Barrack Branch, the Contract Branch, the Commissariat Branch, the Purveyor's Branch—to absorb them and, of course, to take the place and position thus rendered vacant? No, not so; that would have left some slight counterpoise from the yet existing, though decayed functions of Civil Finance. Therefore the Military officer who has been substituted for these different heads has been put into a position far higher than they held—he has been put into a position second only to the Minister himself; he has been put on to the same platform with the Military Under-Secretary. And now, British Public, behold your counterpoise! See the two weights of equal amount! Surely they must balance beautifully! But what is this? They are both in the same scale—both pulling the same way—both General Officers! and against the double strain, Financial Control and the interests of the unhappy Tax-payer "kick the beam."

But what of that? Who cares for the Tax-payer? Are not things now made pleasant in Pall Mall? Do not the two Kings now agree in every point?

Does not the Military "Sword" fraternize most amicably with the Military "Supplies?" and will not all "friction" now be at an end? As for the Purse-bearer, who cares for him? "There! Order him to bring us another million! He must do it! He is our subordinate; and if he growls or appeals to the Minister, we are two to one against him, and can soon twist him down!"

Such is an accurate and exact picture of the state of affairs now existing in Pall Mall. The new Controller-in-Chief has made it a *sine quâ non* of his giving his services to the Public, that his plans, his estimates, his expenditure shall not be subject to the Financial check of any officer of the same or even of the next inferior rank. "They may be looked at by a still smaller subordinate—the Accountant-General—but they shall not be even canvassed by the Assistant Under-Secretary. He is the Representative of the old Secretary at War, the last remaining shadow of the Civil check; therefore he shall not throw that blighting shadow on our new arrangements. He has hitherto done his duty to the Public strictly and fearlessly; therefore he has been disagreeable, and I will have nothing to say to him. I won't be controlled. Am I not a Controller?"

And to this the Secretary of State for War and the powerful permanent "administrative" Conservative Government under which we have the happiness now to be, have, it is said, consented.

XV.

The Control System and its Pretended Savings.

(June 27, 1868.)

The commanding position that has been obtained for the New System of Military Control by the determined attitude assumed by the new Controller-in-Chief, may well be welcomed by the advocates of Military Autocracy as the first victory won in the approaching conflict which is to end the "Dual Government" of the Army, by the defeat and subjugation of one party or the other, either the Military being placed under the Civil Government, or else preserving its Military "Self-Control" by Military agents under the merely nominal cloak of Civil Officers.

Some persons may consider this first victory as "a mere affair of outposts"; but to those who have more closely considered the matter, it is not so. If the Report be true, that Government has conceded to Sir Henry Storks all his demands, it is an undoubted step in advance by the whole Military line. The Civil Financial Control of the "War Office," already unduly weakened, has now been completely abolished. The new System of Military Control has brought a new Military Officer into full power, and he an Officer of such brilliant talents, with such prestige of unbroken success in all his undertakings,

that the advocates of Civil Control may well tremble to see the van led by a Soldier of such ability, and one so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of his order. Nothing could be more masterly than the energy with which Sir Henry Storks has carried his great point of Military Supremacy. True, he has had but a very small Champion to meet; well might he rejoice that neither a Herbert, nor a Lewis, nor a Panmure led the Civil Army against him. But be that as it may, he has conquered all that there was to oppose him, and remains master of the position, waving in the face of a dispirited House of Commons the banner with the strange device, "Power without Responsibility."

The Duke of Wellington said, when asked to define Martial Law, that it was the will of the General in Command. A precisely similar definition will explain Military Control. It is the will of the Commanding Officer, who is responsible to no one, since for every extravagance, for every waste, every increased expense, he pleads the necessity of the situation and his own right of Supreme Control.

And now at Pall Mall every one of the Superior Authorities is a Military man; for in considering the balance of power the Public need not take into consideration the egotistical but good-natured little gentleman who fills the office of Secretary of State for War. All the power is on one side—the Military; and even the House of Commons is deceived by the Min-

ister. He who, before Sir Henry Storks' great victory over the Civil check, promised to submit to the House his plans for the Control Department before carrying them out, now denies that he ever promised to do so. A captive in the hands of a vastly superior power, not even his fear of his legitimate Masters can induce him to do his duty. The first act in the drama is fitly played out. The great Captain, if he cannot yet conquer the Commons, makes his slave—we beg Sir John's pardon, his responsible head—deceive them. Of course all the supporters of the Civil Supremacy must hope that even a dying Parliament may have the spirit to assert its *ultimate* Control—may refuse the unhappy Minister the Vote by which he seeks virtually to destroy his and their Financial check, and may compel him to distinctly show the grounds and particulars of the assumed saving of £25,000 a year, of which Sir John boasted when moving the Army Estimates. But that was before his defeat by his Under-Secretary!

There is but little difficulty in detailing the manner in which this pretended Saving will be effected.

At any given Station of the British Army, where the several duties of the Commissariat, Transport, Purveyors', Store, and Barrack Branches now employ (say) some twelve officers, at an average pay of £400 a year each, consolidation will be made, and one Control Department will be formed. Of the

twelve existing officers, some six or so will be pensioned off at an average of about £200 a year each, three new appointments will be made, and the duties will be performed by some nine officers, averaging some £450 a year each, instead of twelve at £400, saving £750 a year on the cost of the Staff. This for thirty Stations will give a saving of about £23,000 a year.

But two points must be noted. First, that the operation involves an immediate addition to the Dead-weight or Pension Votes of £36,000 a year. Secondly, that these Controllers, while accepting their high salaries—they are to have £1200 a year each—on the plea that they will consolidate the work into fewer hands, have at the same time "*Power to add to their number;*" and there can be no doubt whatever that after a decent interval, for appearances' sake, the new Chiefs will find that an extra Assistant is wanted here, and an additional Deputy must be sent there, until the old numbers are once more fully attained, and the supposed Saving on the Staff is converted into an extra demand of some £27,000 a year, while the extra Dead-weight of £36,000 a year still remains.

This is the arrangement to which the Secretary of State for War has consented, and which, it is said, the Government are prepared to approve!

XVI.

Mr. Disraeli's Little Mistake about the War Office.

(October 17, 1868.)

It may reasonably be expected that now-a-days, in these times of political Léotardism and buffoonery, nothing will astonish the Public.

The German Popular Story of the boy who could not shiver—frighten every one around him how you might—finds its counterpart now in a Public that cannot be surprised. But while there is yet a chance of one single shiver existing, may it not be claimed for a Premier who does not know what are the Constitutional functions of a Secretary of State—for a First Lord of the Treasury who does not know what "my Lords" of the Treasury have decided and have ordered, and have defended in Parliament?

Yet such is the case, taking only one small item of the marvellous Manifesto which, by an "awful dispensation," our mountebank Minister has lately addressed to the historic County of Bucks.

"Her Majesty's Government," says M. Léotard, "by placing in the hands of a single individual a Control over the expenditure of the War Office, commenced a considerable Reform during the late Session in the Administration of the Army."

Now everybody *but* M. Léotard knows that there

has existed ever since 1856 "a single individual" charged with "the Control of the expenditure of the War Office," viz. the Secretary of State for War. What, then, is this new creation of the Prometheus of Bucks? Is he above the Secretary of State, is he under the Secretary of State, or is he in lieu of the Secretary of State? Is Sir John Pakington abolished, superseded, or assisted by this new marvel, this omnivorous, clerkivorous, ministerivorous Monocrat?

But M. Léotard is First Lord of the Treasury as well as Prime Minister. What view have the Lords of Her Majesty's Treasury taken of the appointment of the Controller-in-Chief—the officer referred to by the First Lord? "My Lords" were pleased, under date 29th June, 1868, to be "of opinion that the functions of the Controller-in-Chief should be kept entirely distinct from those of the Financial Department of the War Office," and insisted that he should have beside him, on the same platform, a Financial Officer of the third rank—(for this Manifestoed Monocrat is himself to be only of the third rank in the War Office Cosmogony)—who shall review his arrangements, control his Control, and advise their common Chief as to his proposals.

But perhaps M. Léotard took no part with "my other Lords" in the discussions at the Treasury on this subject, not being aware how important the subject was, or how strong a card he had in his

hand, until he came to play it out when "speaking to Buncombe"—to Buckingham we should say.

Even this plea cannot be pleaded, unless Hansard has joined all the rest of the world in turning against our amusing political Acrobat; for that hitherto credible witness records the part taken by the Leader of the House in the Debate in the Commons on the subject of this very Treasury letter.

How, then, can the statement now made by the Prime Minister be explained? We cannot accept the solution that in the Candidate he deems it expedient to forget the Minister—the First Lord—the Leader of the House; but we can only conclude that he knows, as well as every one else does, that not one word of what he states is true, and that not one word of what he promises is possible; but glories in the cleverness by which he bequeaths to his heir—now very apparent—this "Legacy of Insult."

XVII.

The Finance Branch of the War Office.

(November 7, 1868.)

It appears to be now admitted on all hands that Mr. Disraeli, in his recent Manifesto, made a little

mistake in his account of the functions of the new Controller-in-Chief at the War Office.

This mistake was made on the well-known Johnsonian principle of "Simple ignorance, Sir," yet there have not been wanting admiring Boswells in the Tory Press ready to declare that no mistake has been made at all, but that M. Léotard, still engaged in his favourite occupation of "educating" his party, had induced the Chancellor of the Exchequer and My other Lords of the Treasury to change their views and to accord to the Military Controller the Control of Military Finance, so earnestly desired by the Authorities at the Horse Guards.

Such, however, is not the case. The Civilians at Whitehall and in Pall Mall know too well the history of Civil Control over Army Expenditure to let any modern party "education" touch a principle so intimately interwoven into our Constitution. Mountebanks may amuse and astonish by their agile *tours de force*, their rapid change of front, their daring manœuvres, their amusing pretensions; but they seldom shine in old-world knowledge, or in understanding the foundations or building up of the platform on which they are performing.

The history of Civil Control over Military Expenditure is very short and may be easily explained. From the earliest time, when Parliament permitted the existence of a Standing Army and voted the large Aids or Grants to the Crown to defray the

cost of its maintenance, the Commons appointed their own Commissioners to examine the Accounts of the Expenditure of the sums thus granted; and the Audit of such Accounts was duly reported to the House, and earnestly debated therein when fresh grants were asked for. In the course of time, when the Commons found out their really absolute power, in the appointment of the Ministers of the Crown, and discovered that the King's Ministers themselves were really their nominees, the House came to the conclusion that those Ministers might safely be entrusted with the Audit, on behalf of Parliament, of the grants placed at the disposal of their several Offices for the Military Services; and thus the examination of the accounts by the Parliamentary Commissioners merged into the offices of the Parliamentary Ministers.

Under these circumstances, the blindest advocate of Military Financial Control can scarcely fail to see what very dangerous ground he is venturing upon, in endeavouring to bring the Military Element into predominance in the Offices of the Ministers, thus acting as Trustees, or Auditors, for the House of Commons. We need not waste words on the noble Lord who has given notice that, if he has a seat in the next Parliament, he intends to move that all the Civil Clerks in the Office of the Secretary of State for War should be replaced by Soldier Clerks. We will only suggest to him to get a Return from the

Horse Guards of the number of Regiments, who in their 1000 Rank and File cannot find a single man fit to take the position of copying clerk in the Regimental Orderly-room or Regimental Pay office, and a further return of the number of Regimental clerks who are yearly confined for drunkenness. When he has got these Returns, he will need no advice from us to prevent his bringing forward his motion to man a Government Office from that class of society. But we may perhaps usefully warn those who advocate Military Control in Finance to beware how they lead the House of Commons to doubt whether Military officers are in any way efficient Trustees or Commissioners of Finance *on their behalf;* and if once this mistrust takes possession of the House, the recoil against Military influence of any sort in the Civil Administration of the Army may prove so severe as to settle for a long time all questions as to the *Dual Government.*

At present, moderate measures have been decided upon. The Treasury letter of the 29th June last is a very remarkable paper. It is remarkable in one special feature, viz. that it goes out of the ordinary Treasury track of merely deciding upon a proposal submitted to that Office, and approving it or refusing it. It *originates* a Scheme quite different from that proposed to it, and as superior to the proposed Scheme as the official experience of the Civil Officers of the Crown at the Treasury is to that of the newly

created and, on this subject, inexperienced Authorities in the Control department at Pall Mall.

The Treasury letter enjoins emphatically the maintenance of a high Civil Financial Officer in the War Office. It distinctly affirms the principle that in that Office there must be a fit Representative of the original Parliamentary Commissioners, acting purely on behalf of the House of Commons. The hand that drafted that letter knew better than many recent Ministers the real relation between the House that voted the Supplies and the Office that administered and audited their Expenditure. That letter, despite all the pretended improvements on it suggested by the half "educated" Tory Press, ought to be firmly adhered to by the Constitutionalists on both sides of the House. The Scheme laid down is the best, the soundest, and the most practical yet proposed, simply because it adheres closely to Constitutional Principles, and brings back the vagaries of recent changes to the old starting-point and original intentions of Parliament.

One word must be added against a ridiculous idea that has been promulgated in some suspicious quarters, namely, that the Treasury Scheme contemplates the appointment, as Chief Financial Officer, of some professional Accountant—some certificated Actuary—some financier of the modern school. Nothing of the sort is required for the duties of the Chief Financial Officer at the War Office. He need

not be a De Morgan, nor a Babbage, nor a Peto. He need no more be a City Accountant, acquainted with book-keeping and double entry, than a Lord Chancellor need be competent to engross a deed. What is wanted is a man of good average abilities, not of too amiable or yielding a disposition, of some position in the social world, and completely independent of Military patronage. A man with these qualifications would admirably fill the situation sketched by the Treasury, and would do the State good service, provided one thing is honestly done, viz. that you give him a real position and real power to act. That is the true secret of the weakness of our Financial Control. Many excellent men have been entrusted with the duties, none of them have been entrusted with the *power* to enforce their views. Placed in inferior positions, all their abilities are frittered away in vain contests with the superior Authorities, and they are left powerless and useless.

So long as the Financial Authority is tied and overwhelmed by Military predominance, so long will it be powerless, and so long will our Army Accounts continue to exhibit the maximum of Expenditure with the minimum of Efficiency.

XVIII.

The First Pension under the Control System.

(December 19, 1868.)

Months ago we pointed out that the pretended economy of the Scheme for Control in the Departments of the Army would really be only a cloak for extravagance, waste, and jobbery; that numbers of Officers would be put on large pensions, that numbers more would be promoted to new and more highly paid posts, and that numbers of new appointments would afterwards be made.

Well, the reductions have begun; and have begun, as we foresaw, with reckless extravagance, such as has not often been paralleled. The first high Officer whose reduction the new arrangements have caused has been pensioned off on a pension just five times as large as he had earned by law. The Director of Stores, after twelve years' service at Pall Mall at a salary of £1200 a year, has been put on a pension of £1000 a year for life.

Now, under the Act of Parliament, which governs —or is supposed to govern—such retirements, the highest pension that Admiral Caffin (an Admiral at the War Office!) could have earned after fifty years' service is £800; the pension he is entitled to after his twelve years' service is about £200; and the able arithmeticians at the Treasury seem to have found

out that the only way to calculate the pension they were to give him was by adding what he could have got, but didn't (£800), to what he could have got and did (£200), and so have decreed him a life pension of £1000 a year.

If all the reductions are carried out on this scale, we may indeed tremble at the prospect of the forthcoming Retrenchments.

True it is that we have heard within the last few months of the Reductions in the Naval Dockyards, which have "reduced" numbers of labourers and their families to penury and the workhouse. But they were *only labourers*, without any "rights" to "retired allowances;" and are not the savings on their wages available towards giving "handsome" pensions to the poor Officers who have to be reduced?

May we suggest to some one of "our new Members" that he might signalize his commencement of Parliamentary life by strictly watching and closely scrutinizing the various Retirements which "our new Economies" will render henceforth of daily occurrence. Let his voice be first heard in Westminster denouncing such obbery and robbery of the hard-pressed Taxpayer, as is involved in such "Retrenchments." Let him demand a distinct and definite statement of what Reductions are to be made, of what promotions have been promised, and of what numbers are to be retained in connection

with the new Scheme for Army Control. Let him, moreover, ascertain whether any of the appointments in the new Departments have even already been given to Officers who are not in the ranks of the Departments to be reduced, thus entailing unnecessary pensions on the Public. Let him consistently and persistently undertake the scrutiny of these extravagances, and we will promise him the gratitude of the Nation,—and, also, plenty of work to occupy him for some time to come.

XIX.

The Control System at the War Office.

(January 2, 1869.)

The new Premier has taken up the subject of Military Reform at once, and in real earnest; and, if what everybody says is true, he has found from the first starting what a terribly up-hill course he has got to run.

If the sole object of the late Ministry was so to complicate matters of Army Administration as to cause the largest conceivable amount of embarrassment to their successors, they have succeeded to an extent that surpasses any success they have achieved in any other direction.

The reckless manner in which the late Premier spoke at random of the functions of the new Controller-in-Chief, contradicting in an ill-considered wordy boast in his Manifesto the deliberate decision of the Treasury Board, of which he was at the head, but still worse the exaggerated importance which he attached to the appointment—which is of importance merely to the extent of the mischief it is capable of producing—by mentioning it in the speech from the Throne, these manœuvres of our late Conservative Minister have fettered the action of the new Secretary of State for War most seriously. It is without precedent since the Revolution of 1688 for any direct reference to be made in the Royal Speech to any internal measure of Army Administration, and it is felt at Pall Mall that the mention of this subject from the Throne indicates that it has suited the late Premier to represent to his Royal Mistress that the Royal Prerogative is involved in the new appointment of a Controller-in-Chief; and it is to be feared that the representation has been to the effect that this new arrangement has secured over Army Administration in Pall Mall the same direct influence of the Crown as is already exercised over Army Executive at the Horse Guards.

And in this view some of our Contemporaries have already hazarded the conjecture that the appointment of Mr. Cardwell to the War Office has

been made with the object of obtaining a supporter of the Royal Prerogative over the democratic tendencies of Mr. Gladstone; and great has been the anxiety and long the discussion in a certain levee-room over a certain archway near Whitehall, as to whether Mr. C. is strong enough to oppose Mr. G., and to support Prerogative against "Popularization."

The public will therefore easily understand that the new Minister of War is grievously fettered in his judgment as to the value and expediency of the new Control System; and as easily can they understand that the accomplished tactician who now acts as Controller-in-Chief, though holding an official rank far above what the post confers, is not likely to abate one jot of his pretensions, or of his extravagant demands for absolute independence and freedom from all Civil check, when he finds himself the subject of Royal solicitude in a speech from the Throne, and the groundwork of a glorification-paragraph in a Premier's Manifesto.

And so the fight in Pall Mall waxes hot and furious—the fight between Military independence and Civil Control—the fight between the Armed Force and the House of Commons. Luckily for us it is a fight of words and of Reports, not of swords and guns. But for all that, it involves as momentous an issue as many a ruder conflict has done in years gone by.

What the issue will be, who can foresee? Distinguished talent, high social position, influential partisans, and the support of the Court are all ranged on one side; on the other side is *merely the people*, represented, it is to be feared, by only lukewarm advocates, by men with good intentions, and, to some extent, clear and constitutional views, but men quite willing to believe that it cannot be required of them to banish themselves from good society, and to take up an attitude of opposition to the Court and to the Royal Chief of the Army on a point which is so doubtful, on which "Public Opinion" is represented to be so divided, and in which they may flatter themselves that a "trial of the new Scheme" can do "no very great harm."

Such wavering counsels find no favour in our eyes. *C'est le premier pas qui coûte*—and we desire to lift up our voice—weak as it may be—to warn the new Ministers that whichever party wins the day now will keep the victory for a long season,—that if the Military Powers succeed in throwing off the check of Civil Control, they will maintain the supremacy until some popular convulsion tears it violently from them, and at the same time consigns to contempt the "men of the people," who, while rightly disregarding the obsolete and effete claim of "Unalterable Rights" in Church matters, abandoned the Rights of the people to check and control the Armed Force maintained in the midst of them. If the "Horse

Guards' Plot," as it has been significantly termed, is successful under the new Administration in Pall Mall, the day will most assuredly come when the victors will have to confess that one such victory was worse to their cause than a hundred defeats.

XX.

The main Punishment for ill-conducted Soldiers should be Dismissal.

(October 24, 1868.)

"Whichever Party may be in power next year," says Mr. Gladstone to the men of Warrington, "one thing I will guarantee you, and that is, that you will have greatly diminished Estimates." And there is no doubt that both sides are agreed that Retrenchment shall be the Order of the day. Retrenchment in Army, and in Navy. Retrenchment, reasonable or unreasonable, judicious or injudicious. The only question in the race is, which Party shall reach the lowest figure—the lowest sum total.

Well, it is very certain that there is great room for Retrenchment, and ample field for the judicious use of the Pruning Knife. But we confess to having great fears that the Reductions will be too hurried to be well considered, too much extorted by Party

motives to be safe and reasonable. However, although even injudicious Retrenchment may be better than none, yet it may be worth while to think over some items of possible saving, which might themselves be benefits to the Service, while bringing with them the further blessing of diminishing the Public Expenditure.

One such measure will occur to the mind of every Military Reformer. Let this opportunity of Reduction be seized, to rid the Army of all bad characters. The recently published Statistics of Military Imprisonment have revealed to the Public some extraordinary specialities of Military life. Cases are recorded of Soldiers tried by Court-martial no less than twenty times in one year. Picture that to yourself, non-military Reader! Realize what that means, thou uncomplaining Taxpayer! It means this: that a Soldier may be so bad, that he is too bad to be turned out of the Service. Fancy one of the Ministers bringing his butler or valet to trial for successive crimes twenty times in one year. Would any one out of Bedlam,—or, even, in Bedlam, as Mr. Bright says,—think for a moment of so dealing with a servant that he has to pay and feed out of his own pocket. No, the man does not live who would keep a servant in his own house to be thus always *on trial*. And yet there are hundreds of well-intentioned, ordinarily-intelligent Officers who will tell you that it is an excellent practice as regards her Majesty's

Servants in the Army. In fact, that the Service would "go to the dogs, Sir," if you did not insist upon hundreds of Soldiers being kept in the Army, only to be shut up in prison,—if you did not expend £80,000 a year in supporting 3650 soldiers in confinement, not to mention the half million of money that you have already spent in building Military Prisons.

It is true that in the Estimates laid before Parliament the cost of the Imprisonment Vote is put at £15,000 only, instead of £80,000, and that only £15,000 is voted annually for this service. But this pleasantly modified result is attained by the clever device of deducting from the £80,000 the sum of £65,000, being the unused pay of the 3650 Soldiers always in prison. Thus by an ingenious legerdemain you vote, firstly, 3650 men more than you want, together with £65,000 for pay more than you will pay them; and, secondly, as you keep that number of men in perpetual imprisonment, you vote £80,000 towards the cost of confining them.

Nation of lunatics that we are, would any one venture to ask even the House of Commons for £500,000 to build prisons to shut up badly behaved Policemen, and to take £65,000 in the Police Vote as the pay of 3650 policemen always in prison? And yet without any whisper of a Commission of Lunacy, the Secretary of State for War actually so deals with the House every year with regard to the pay of the 3650 imprisoned Soldiers.

Is the case desperate — is it wholly without remedy? On the contrary, the remedy is in our own hands, and is a perfectly easy one. Let the main punishment in the Army be, as in the Police Force, —DISMISSAL. Let the present occasion of Retrenchment and Reduction be taken advantage of to get rid of all bad and useless men from the Army. Let the pernicious System of Bounty be abolished, so that the men thus discharged would have no inducement to re-enlist, and the brutal system of branding men to prevent them re-enlisting would no longer be necessary. Let it be felt throughout the Army and throughout the Nation that service in her Majesty's Army is an honour, to be lost by misconduct, not a penal servitude, to be endured and held to by force; and for every incorrigible blackguard dismissed the Army, a dozen respectable young men will be eager to join it, to enter a body of men purged from all that are known to contaminate, and assured that no longer will they be required to associate with men who are kept in the Service because they are too bad to be turned out of it. Then, instead of the whole parish weeping over the lad who has "*disgraced*" himself by entering the Queen's Army, the thrifty farmer, father of six sons, would send three of them to the plough and three to the Army; and in a few years the return of those sons, well-educated, well-disciplined, and accustomed to decent companionship in their Regiments, would bring more Recruits to

the Recruiting Sergeant in the neighbouring town than all the inveigling, drinking, and bounty-giving of the present System can procure.

Any way, let the plan have a trial. No change can be for the worse. Nothing can well be a greater failure than the present System, with its 3650 Soldiers always in prison, and its twenty Courts-martial per annum per man. Let the plan be tried; if it fails, it can be abandoned at any moment. But let it be tried, and never could it be tried at a better moment than the present.

XXI.

The Necessity for Shortening the Period of Service of British Troops in India.

(October 31, 1868.)

It requires some little courage to discuss, nay, even to reflect upon, any measure of Military Reform, after the alarming statement recently made by the "leading Journal" to the effect, that men's minds are now agitated by schemes for Army "Democratization" and "Nationalization."

There is an ancient Joe Miller story of the coaching days, in which a stout, but highly nervous, old lady having made it somewhat difficult for the two

gentlemen beside her to find their seats, one of them blandly observed that it didn't signify, they would soon shake down and amalgamate. "Lor Sir," the old lady exclaimed, "you don't mean to say that! and is it likely to be fatal?"

It would seem as well to ask the *Times* the same question; for if the processes referred to in those two alarming words mean that the Army is to be altogether smashed up and destroyed by any Schemes for its Reform, then it would be as well to drop the subject altogether. If, however, all those syllables merely mean that the Service is to be made popular and its Government put on a plain simple footing—then those who wish well, very well, to the Service may still persevere quietly, and in words of less than six syllables, to discuss Schemes for Military Reform.

And one measure to make the Army more popular —more suited to the feelings of our home-loving people—would undoubtedly be to shorten *considerably* the periods of Foreign Service.

At present a Regiment goes to India, or to one of the Colonies, there to serve for twelve years; that is, in fact, for the longest period during which the law allows any man to be enlisted for the Army. Twelve years' banishment from friends and family! For the Officer this is mitigated by the power of obtaining a furlough—an expensive luxury, it is true, but yet a luxury. But there are no furloughs from India for the Private or Non-commissioned Officer;

no breaking in half of this long period of banishment.

This is "hard lines" for the Soldiers, and it is contrasted, among the recruit-giving ranks, most unfavourably with the constant change of scene and climate which Jack Tar enjoys in his triennial trips across the world. Three years east, three years west, three years north, and three years south, goes Jack the Sailor, in just the same period of service that Tommy Atkins the Soldier has passed in the dull monotony of twelve weary twelve-months in burning India.

And a still more important consideration urges strongly the adoption of a system of shorter periods of service abroad, viz. the great saving of human life that would undoubtedly ensue. When, when will it be possible to induce the Military Authorities to recognise the policy—to say nothing of the duty—of *saving life?* This was the policy of Lord Napier in his glorious Campaign in Abyssinia. There the fighting machine, Man, was recognized as worth taking the utmost care of. There he was wanted. His enormous value was admitted, and he was most jealously preserved. And this excellent policy should prevail in the long years of Peace, as well as in the hour of War.

Let the Authorities at the War Office, then, take up this subject of a long or short period of service in India, and its effects on the health of the Troops.

Let it be diligently inquired into by a competent tribunal, and on the result of these inquiries let the question stand or fall. All inquiries hitherto made, not with this view especially, but in the general investigation of the health of the Troops abroad, point to but one result, viz. that in a body of men proceeding from Europe to India, for the first four or five years the bracing effects of our Northern Climate serve to protect them against the enervating influences of the Climate of India. But after that time the effect wears off, and the protection is gone. In the sixth, seventh, and eighth years of Indian Service, the sickness, invaliding, and deaths rise to a frightful height, and all, except men of the strongest constitution, succumb and come home,—or die.

If a careful, unprejudiced inquiry serves to establish the truth of this view, then let the period of immunity from disease, and preservation of good health, be adopted as the period for Service abroad, viz. five or six years; and let no consideration of the increased cost of more frequently moving the Regiments be allowed to decide the question; for what is that increased cost, in fact, but the price of bringing our men home alive, instead of leaving their dead bodies in the sands of India?

XXII.

The Depôt Battalion System.

(November 21, 1868.)

"Reductions! We must insist upon reductions, especially in the Army."

Such is the cry alike of Electors and Elected all over the Country this week; but there the unanimity ceases, and scarcely any two speakers agree in the items to be reduced. "Reduce the Staff," says one, "but spare the Regiments." "Reduce the Regimental Officers," says another, "but spare the Scientific Corps." "Reduce the expenses for Scientific Experiments," says a third, "but give us at once the best armed and the most efficient Troops at the lowest possible cost." "Above all," says a fourth, "reduce the Depôt Battalions, for they are wholly useless, and there is no one interested in keeping them up except the Horse Guards, who like to have a number of comfortable home appointments for officers who have seen much service abroad, and don't want to go out again." And a very natural "don't want," too, when it is remembered that "going out again" means another period of twelve or fourteen years' transportation. If the Authorities could only be induced to try the experiment of shorter periods of Foreign Service, they would find themselves much less tormented by "influential

friends" who "don't want" their relatives to go out again.

But, until common sense rules on this point (and how hard to expect such an exceptional occurrence !) Depôt Battalions will be a favourite resource of the Authorities at the Horse Guards for providing for "stay-at-home" friends.

The question, however, that the would-be reducers of Public Expense should get answered is whether, besides this home accommodation to favoured Officers, there are any such advantages attending the System of Depôt Battalions as can justify the expense of their maintenance.

The answer, so far as the pleas as yet put forward for the existence of these Battalions go, cannot, it is conceived, be satisfactory to the Tax-payer. They mainly rest upon the necessity of making the raw Recruit and the young Officer become from the first a part of their Regiment by sending them to the Depôt of the Corps to which they may be appointed. The object supposed to be gained by this is the early formation of an *Esprit de Corps,* which is assumed to be the essence and life of the Regimental System, which again is supposed to be the mainstay and chief support of the whole British Army.

This feeling is, we have no hesitation in saying, greatly exaggerated and over-estimated. It is a part of the unfortunate System of our Army to keep the Men and Officers alike from any *intelligent* dis-

charge of their duty, and to confine them to a blind following of old watchwords and the narrow limits of devotion, not to their Sovereign, their Country, and their duty, but to their Corps and their Regimental Colours. *Esprit de Corps* is a strong band, only where intelligence and rational service are weak ones; and it cannot be doubted, that if the System of General Enlistment of Recruits was carried out far more generally than at present, and was followed by their being collected for drill and instruction in a few large General Depôts—to which young Officers on first appointment might also be sent to learn their duties—much improved discipline would be ensured, much quicker progress in instruction would be obtained, and a vast deal of the expense of the present System of Depôt Battalions would be saved.

Moreover, on abolishing the System of Regimental Depôts, it will be possible to put an end to a fruitful source of trouble, misery, and extravagant expense—namely, the Reduction of Officers to Half-pay, on their Regiments coming home from Foreign Service. The Establishment of a Regiment is increased on going abroad, and two of its Companies are left at home as a Depôt. Promotions are made, and extra expenses thereby incurred. When the Regiment comes home again, the added Officers, or those who have succeeded to their places, are put upon Half-pay, and a permanent burden is thus added to the Half-pay list, while young and active Officers

are shelved to idleness, and their prospects of advancement in their profession blighted. All these variations of Establishment for Home and Foreign Service would cease, were the Regimental Depôt System abolished; and much expense to the Public, and great hardships to the Officers, would be prevented.

To reduce the Depôt Battalions, and to institute General Depôts for Recruits among both Officers and Men, appears, therefore, to be as feasible a cry as any that have yet been raised, for diminishing the Expense of the Army, while at the same time increasing its Efficiency.

XXIII.

The Militia as a Recruiting Nursery for the Line.

(December 5, 1868.)

Considerable disappointment, not to say dissatisfaction, has been felt in the ranks of the Militia, in consequence of the omission in the Military Toast at the Guildhall Feast of all mention of the Militia; the Army having been toasted, and the Volunteers having been toasted, but no mention having been made of the Militia.

It is of course possible, nay probable, that the

omission was purely accidental; if it was intentional, no words would be too strong to reprobate so studied a slight upon the old Constitutional Force of the Country, and no place could have been less appropriate for such a slight than the Banquet Hall of the City of London, whose Train-bands and City Militia have never failed to make themselves felt in times of internal disturbance in this Country.

As far as regards the reply to the Toast, it was hardly possible for the Duke of Cambridge to introduce the mention of a Force not mentioned in the Toast to which he was answering; and the Militia may rest most entirely assured that their value is fully recognized and their zeal and loyalty acknowledged by His Royal Highness, the Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief, who has on many occasions almost gone out of his way to express his sense of the importance of the Militia Force as the first line of Reserve behind the Regular Army of the Country.

But, at the same time, it may be doubted whether the Militia is utilized to its full extent, or put into active operation for aiding the Regular Forces as prominently as it might be, either by the Government or by the Militia themselves.

As regards the Government, there can scarcely be a second opinion that in sanctioning the plan, some few years ago, for Militiamen to re-engage for a second period, the Authorities at the War Office

took a wholly erroneous view of the object and aims of the Militia Force. Clearly the main object of that Force is to have at hand a large number of partially, if not completely, trained young men ready to form an active Reserve in time of necessity; and further to have a System by which a large number of the population shall have received the rudiments of training and Military discipline. What, then, could be the object of inducing, by increased Bounties, tens of thousands of trained Militiamen to re-engage for the purpose of being trained again! Thus each man trained cost twice as much as he need have done, and the numbers trained were only one-half what they might have been. It is to be hoped that among the expected measures of Military Reform, and when the great question of an effective Reserve shall receive the attention it so fully deserves, the re-engagement of Militiamen may be at once put a stop to. There is no difficulty whatever in filling the ranks of the Militia Regiments. In fact, some of the larger Corps are under restrictive orders not to take candidates beyond a certain number below their Quota. There can, therefore, be no necessity for filling the School with Pupils who have already completed their course of instruction.

And, upon the same consideration, there can be no reason why much greater encouragement should not be given to Militiamen to enlist into the Regular Army. At present this is *allowed*, but by no means

encouraged; and yet it is manifest that a Militia-man with his one, two, or three years' drilling, is worth more than a raw Recruit who has yet to learn the goose-step, and it would be worth while to allow such trained men to reckon the whole of their Militia service as Army service, and, in fact, to give every inducement to such men to go from playing at soldiers to actual service.

What, then, can be the reason why the Government do not adopt so manifestly simple a plan for feeding the Army without the necessity of keeping up the expensive machinery of the Recruiting Service? The answer is not a comfortable one. It is because many Militia Colonels have Seats in the House and Votes in Parliament, and many Militia Colonels object to have their Regiments "pulled to pieces after all the pains they have taken in drilling them," and "to have their corps made mere pipes for supplying the Army." Some Colonels of Militia take a much less narrow view of the case, and give free leave to their men to join the Army. They recognize the advantage of establishing a close connection between the Militia and one or more Regiments of the Line, giving the Line their young men as Recruits, and receiving back from the Line veteran Soldiers as Sergeants and Instructors; and this reciprocal tie has uniformly been found to work admirably, wherever it has been fairly tried. And it is an undoubted fact that those Regiments of

Militia that most freely give their men leave to transfer their services to the Line are the Regiments that have found the least difficulty in refilling all vacancies in their ranks. But such cases are the exceptions; and fortunate it will be for the Country and for the Militia when such exceptions become the general rule, and when the Militia, closely connected with the Line, will serve as a Reserve, a Nursery, and a Refuge for the Regular Troops. Then the Recruiting for the Army will no longer be a source of doubt, of trouble, and of infinite expense; and then the Militia need not fear they will be slighted or overlooked by the Military Authorities, or by the Country, even though they may be forgotten by the Toastmaster at Guildhall.

XXIV.

The Control of the Militia.

(February 6, 1869.)

The very rapid strides made in Naval Retrenchments at the Admiralty quite put into the shade the few alterations and Reductions which Mr. Cardwell at the War Office has determined upon, or at any rate has allowed to transpire.

But we are content to "bide a wee;" for not only do we recognize a considerable distinction between

Retrenchments and Reforms, but also we are disposed to think that changes made very rapidly are apt to be made rather for changes' sake than from deliberate conviction.

Moreover, there is at the Army Offices a contending or withstanding Power, face to face with the Minister, which is not known at the Admiralty; and that Power is a great Power and must be propitiated, or be got rid of, or be *got over*, before much progress can be made; in fact, it requires no little persistence on the part of the Minister to prevent himself from being pushed backwards instead of being able to advance; and on one point it is understood that the Commander-in-Chief is just now most earnestly pushing forward to the further destruction of the Constitutional equipoise—or balance of the National Forces.

Great efforts are being made by the Horse Guards to get the Militia Forces put under the Commander-in-Chief for all appointments or promotions and on all points of discipline. We believe that in one particular the Royal Duke has carried his point, and has persuaded the Secretary of State to abandon the recently established Scheme for a Militia Reserve. The present members are not to be disbanded, but they are not to be added to; and any Reserve Force that may be organized is to be a Horse Guards Force, and not a War Office organization.

On the much greater point of the Control of the

Militia, we earnestly trust that Mr. Cardwell will never give way to the demands of the Horse Guards. To make the Militia a part of the Standing Army of the Country, removing from it its local character, and taking the appointments out of the hands of the several Lords Lieutenants of Counties, to centralize them, in the hands of the Commander-in-Chief and his Patronage Secretary at the Horse Guards, will be a step wholly in the wrong direction, and will be fraught with collateral issues and consequences affecting the Constitution of the Country far beyond what appears on the surface of the matter; and cannot but be viewed with the greatest apprehension by all those who have watched with any attention the recent too successful attempts to centralize Military Power and Control in irresponsible hands.

Any change in the position of affairs ought to be in precisely the opposite direction. Instead of taking the Militia from the War Office and giving it to the Duke, let Ministers take the Duke from the Horse Guards and give him his proper place under the Secretary of State at the War Office; and then he will have full supervision over the appointments and promotions of both the Army and the Militia, under the direction and orders of a responsible Minister of the Crown.

XXV.

The New War Lord OF *the Treasury, but* AT *the War Office.*

(January 9, 1869.)

Strange diseases require strange remedies. On this theory, Ministers must think the state of the War Department most exceptional, if we may judge from the very exceptional arrangement which they have made to grapple with the disease.

In one respect this arrangement is not at all exceptional. On the contrary, it is quite normal; for, always, the first step in the course of affected Retrenchment and Economy is the creation of a new and well-paid Appointment.

But what an arrangement it is, that has now been made! A Lord of the Treasury has been appointed, and "potted out," as the gardeners say, into the delightful garden—not of Eden, but of that other Paradise, the War Office! And this Lord of the Treasury, this Member of a Board which, by the Constitution, is *supreme* in matters of Finance, which sits in judgment, in the last resort, on the proposals of the several Departments, this joint King over Secretaries of State, tells his constituents that he is going to work heartily under "HIS CHIEF, the Secretary of State for War!" Well, we all know who at present rules financially over the Secretary of State for War; so we have now the financial edifice com-

pletely reversed and upset, conically quivering on its apex, instead of being firmly seated on its base! The Controller-in-Chief rules despotically over the Secretary of State, in virtue of his direct appointment under the Royal Speech; the Secretary of State, in revenge, rules over the Treasury Board; and Parliament may look in vain for any possible check over Army Expenditure, when all the supreme power and all the actual Control are vested in an officer, not only of the purest Military instincts, but also irresponsible to Parliament, or anyone else—a subordinate, yet supreme—a Controller, and truly uncontrolled.

The new "War Lord of the Treasury," as he calls himself, is a member of the House of Commons, and is there to assist "his Chief," the overladen Minister of War. This would be an excellent arrangement, if the Minister of War were really his Chief; but he is not. We have pointed out long since how greatly the War Department needs increased Representation in the Lower House, and how that increased Representation might be obtained without any increased expense—without the creation of any new Appointment—merely by having the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for War a Commoner instead of a Lord. If this arrangement had been adopted by Ministers, then Captain Vivian, as Under-Secretary of State for War, would have been in his proper place, both in Pall Mall and in

the House. But when Lord Northbrook, with most commendable sacrifice of personal claims to higher employment in the Government, accepted the post of Parliamentary Under-Secretary, this arrangement became impossible. And will the public ever guess why Ministers insisted upon retaining a War-Office Representative in the Upper House, even though their Lord President of the Council, a *ci-devant* Minister of War, could have answered all the purposes of such Representation? No; nobody in their senses could ever guess the reason—so we will tell it. It has been done, because Ministers were afraid that, unless there were a recognized *ex-officio* Representative of the War Office in the House of Lords, the Royal Duke at the head of the Horse Guards would be constantly taking upon himself to answer on Military points on behalf of the Government. We venture to think that whoever urged this plea in the Cabinet, knew very little of the character of his Royal Highness, and of his constant and ready adhesion to the principle of always regulating his proceedings in accordance with the views of Her Majesty's responsible Advisers. No one would have been more ready to accept the Ministerial arrangement for the Lord President to undertake in the House of Lords the Representation of the Government in Military matters than the Duke of Cambridge; and we still hope that further reflection may induce the Government to put an early

end to the present anomalous and expensive arrangements—to remove the Under-Secretary for War from the Upper to the Lower House—to put the "War Lord" into his legitimate position as "War Commoner No. 2," where he is well able to do good and efficient service as the assistant, subordinate, and adviser of "War Commoner No. 1," and where his employment will not lead to the present increased expenditure of £1000 a year—£1000 a year wantonly wrung from the British Tax-payer, merely to save Ministers from coming to an understanding with a Royal Duke.

XXVI.

The useless Appointment of a second Major to Cavalry Regiments at Home.

(February 20, 1869.)

If our present Rulers are really in earnest in their professions of economy, they cannot better prove their sincerity than by combating Abuses and effecting Retrenchments that have specially and notably defied the efforts or evaded the vigilance of their predecessors in Office.

Let us put this to the test in a given instance. *Ex uno*—as it were—*discere omnes.*

There has been of late years a heavy charge thrown upon the Public in one particular point of our Army Organization without producing the slightest possible benefit to the Public Service, even by the confession of its strongest advocates. We refer to the employment of a second Major in each Cavalry Regiment of the Line at home. Now it is admitted on all hands that there is not the least advantage to the Service in having a second Major to a Cavalry Regiment at home. Yet this heavy expense, amounting to some eight or nine thousand a year, has been thrown upon the Public, simply because a certain Major in a certain Cavalry Regiment had Parliamentary Interest enough, some two years ago, to make a great difficulty about being placed on half-pay.

We really hardly expect people to believe in the truth of what we are stating, so gross, so abominable, so extraordinary are the facts of the case—so utterly out of proportion to the injury to the individual is the injury to the Public by which it was averted, through the Private Interest brought to bear by the sufferer.

Charles Lamb, in one of his inimitable Essays, tells the story of some South Sea Islanders, whose village was consumed on a certain occasion by a devastating conflagration. Among other houses destroyed was the Palace of their Chieftain; and when the ruins were removed there was found under

them the carcase of His Sable Majesty's Prime—Pig. This was eagerly devoured by the hungry Court, and pronounced to be most excellent. Never before had they tasted *roast* pork, never again would they taste *boiled* pork; and an Ordinance was passed, *nem. con.*, that whenever a pig was cooked again in the Islands, it should be put into one of the best houses in the village, and the house burnt down over it, in order to secure its complete and satisfactory cooking, in accordance with the newly-discovered Recipe for Roast Pork.

Is there any one of us who will not laugh at the utter disproportion between the means employed and the end obtained? Yet surely roast pork is better than half-pay, and a South Sea Islander's best house can hardly be worth £8000 a year.

Mais, revenons à nos moutons. The facts of the case are these. Our Cavalry Regiments at home have never required a second Major, in fact they have little employment indeed for one Major. In India which, as a rule, is the only Foreign Station to which our Cavalry Regiments go, they require, it is considered, a second Major. In consequence of this difference of Establishment, when a Cavalry Regiment leaves England for India a Captain is promoted to be "Major without purchase," at the public expense, and by the free gratuitous gift to him and the other Officers of the Regiment of a Commission worth £3200, which they can thereafter sell, though they

never bought it. In like manner the Cavalry Regiment coming home in lieu of the one sent out has, on reaching England, a supernumerary Major—one Major more than can possibly be wanted under any circumstances in this Country, or until the Regiment goes out again to India in fifteen or seventeen years' time. By the rules of the Service, this supernumerary Major should be put on half-pay until he can be brought to full-pay on a vacancy. But some two years ago this *going to half-pay* fell to the turn of a Cavalry Major, who did not like half-pay, and had powerful private friends both at the Horse Guards and in Parliament. He exerted all his interest; he threatened opposition; he promised support; and the Government, anxious only to make things pleasant, actually burnt down the house to make him comfortable, and ordered that he should remain on full pay in this Country, although his services were in no possible way required, and that in future every Cavalry Regiment returning from India should retain a second Major for ever thereafter.

It needs no comment to point out the monstrous iniquity of this eight thousand pounder job. It condemns itself on the face of it. For if a second Major is necessary for a Cavalry Regiment at home, why is such officer not appointed to all the Cavalry Regiments that are at home? If he is not necessary, why is he retained in each Regiment as it comes home from India.

Of course the just and proper course to be pursued in the matter of this difference of Establishment at home and abroad is to appoint to the out-going Regiment, as second Major, the junior Major of the home-coming Regiment, or, if he has no wish to continue for a further period in India, to put him on half-pay, and appoint an Officer from half-pay to the out-going Regiment.

But this would deprive the Royal Duke at the head of the Army of the nice little patronage of giving away in twenty-eight Regiments Commissions valued at £89,600, which sum soon goes into the pockets of the Officers, and adds to the dead weight of the "Purchase System" to come one day out of the pockets of the unhappy Tax-payer.

Does any one believe that if the Civil Element ruled at the War Office instead of the Military—if the Under-Secretary of State at Pall Mall was a Civil servant of the Crown, and the check he ought to be at the Horse Guards, in lieu of being merely the Registry Clerk of the Commander-in-Chief, to register at Pall Mall all the jobs perpetrated at Whitehall,—that £89,600 would be given away, and £8000 a year added to the cost of the Army merely to gratify a Royal Duke!

These are the facts of the case, incredible as they appear; and they are the direct result of the Military Control at the War Office fraternizing with the Military Administration at the Horse Guards.

Let this case, then, be the "Shibboleth" of our new Minister at War. Let him at once put an end to this iniquity, or let him own himself powerless against Royal Influences and Private Interests; and let the people of this country know that the professions of Retrenchment are a mere sham to hit dockyard labourers and junior clerks, but not to touch the "Upper Ranks," and let them be ready at an early day to demand the accession to power of real Reformers, who will guard the public purse without respect of persons, and who will not only dish up this nice little bit of "Roast Pork," but will be prepared, as our Transatlantic Cousins say, "to run the entire animal."

XXVII.

The forthcoming Army Estimates (1869).

(March 13, 1869.)

We are awaiting with considerable anxiety the Statement which will be made by the Secretary of State for War in introducing his Estimates to the House of Commons, as we confess that those Estimates have not by any means fulfilled our expectations of Mr. Cardwell's Reforming Powers, even allowing for the known caution with which he was sure to proceed.

But the main point in which we had hoped that some sign would be given is left absolutely untouched. Need we explain that we allude to the preposterous expense of a double Military Staff?—a Military Staff at the Horse Guards to command the Army, and a second Military Staff at Pall Mall to command the Military Staff at the Horse Guards, their superiors in the Army.

The House by the Minister, and the Public by the *mis*leading Journal, have been thrown into darkness more profound than ever, by declarations of the non-existence of any Dual Government. If there is no Dual Government, why is there a Dual Staff to govern? If there is no Dual Government, why does the Military Chief take "the Queen's Pleasure," on appointments and promotions, direct, and not through the responsible Minister? If there is no Dual Government, why do Ministers keep a noble Under-Secretary of State for War in the Upper House, where he is not wanted, except to silence the Commander-in-Chief, to the exclusion of a Commoner in the Lower House, where his aid to the Minister is so greatly needed? If there is no Dual Government, why does the Civil Minister at War require a Staff of Military Advisers, independent of the Staff at the Horse Guards? If the Commander-in-Chief were really, *in practice*, a subordinate Officer to the Secretary of State, he would be his Military Adviser, and there would be no need for a Military

Under-Secretary of State at £2000 a year in Pall Mall.

However, the assertions that have been made in the House on this subject leave it in a state in which it cannot be allowed to rest; and we trust that, in the discussions that must inevitably follow, the true state of the case will come out, and that some slight amount of light will be let in; then we cannot doubt but that the extravagant absurdity of the present System must, on being exposed, be condemned and put an end to.

Again, we are disappointed in finding that the glaring and atrocious job of a second Major in Cavalry Regiments at home has not been put down by Mr. Cardwell. It is possible that his "Military Adviser" may have been too anxious to stand well with the Duke to have drawn the Minister's attention to it. But there it is, actually recorded in the items of *increase* on this year's Estimates—"the pay and allowances of an additional Officer; that is, for the Major for the Cavalry Regiment that will return from India in the course of this year." Can we not find a single "Military Reformer" in the House to move the reduction of the Estimates by the amount of this added Officer's pay—an Officer who, it has never been pretended by any one, is or can be of the slightest use?

Nor is it satisfactory to find that the main reductions in the Army Estimates, beyond the money

gained by putting off for this year the purchase of Stores or the Manufacture of guns, which must be purchased or manufactured sooner or later, are obtained by reducing to the extent of some 11,000 men the strength of our Army. This is the item which, of all our expensive items, we can least afford to diminish. Our Army Expenditure is fearfully large: our Army Force is fearfully small. Our excessive Staffs, not our weak Battalions, should have first felt the Pruning Knife: and we cannot help fearing that in Mr. Cardwell's endeavours for Retrenchment he has not sufficiently kept in view the maintenance of the efficiency of the Army, while he has in no way combated successfully the influence of the Horse Guards in perpetrating useless and extravagant jobs and "dual" and conflicting Offices.

XXVIII.

Military Affairs in Parliament.—The Speech on the Estimates.

(March 27, 1869.)

Life is chequered to us all; and therefore, even a Military Reformer must expect to meet with discouragements as well as encouragements, from time to time. But the last few days have been marked

with a very chequered collection of the ups and downs of disappointment and satisfaction.

At first a great disappointment, when the important subject of the Dual Government fell into such wretched hands as those of the rubicund Member for Brighton, who so completely muddled his subject, so completely displayed the *cramming* by which he had manifestly been primed by persons outside who did understand what they were talking about, while he as manifestly did not, that he stopped all rational discussion on this important question, and was actually put down as "nonsensical" by Sir John Pakington. Fancy the ponderous Eagle of the South Coast swooping down on his Royal Prey and then trodden underfoot and trampled on by a Cock-sparrow in patent leather boots!

After this, the Cock-sparrow, in the patent leather boots, elated at his easy victory over his burly opponent, flew at higher game, and attacked the new War Lord of the Treasury. It would seem that the said little bird, fluttering about the backstairs of his old quarters in Pall Mall, was guided by his very prominent nose to the room in the War Office in which sits the new Junior Lord; and then he smelt smoke, and, like another old goose, alarmed the Capitol, announcing to the House that whether the new Lord did anything else he could not say, but certainly one thing he did—he smoked. Courtesy generally protects an absent Member from per-

sonal attack; and in this case the want of courtesy was more signal, knowing, as Sir John must have done, that his victim's absence was caused by the heaviest domestic affliction. And the want of courtesy was only equalled by the want of truth on Sir John's part. We are very sure that, during his two *months* of Office, Captain Vivian has given more assistance to the Secretary of State in forwarding his Economies and Reforms, than Sir John gave to the public in maintaining their interests during the two *years* of his calamitous Administration at the War Office. If Captain Vivian has begun his career in smoke, it is certain that Sir John ended his in the same; and if Captain Vivian's Office labours are typified by a cigarette, Sir John's Administration may be truly designated as a mere-sham.

But alongside these foolish failures, the Military Reformer finds reason for rejoicing at the sound Constitutional views enunciated by Ministers in their denunciation of one of the many last dying jobs of the Tories—the appointment of Major-General Wetherall to be Under-Secretary for Ireland. This distinguished Officer was well known to everybody,—except the Ministers who selected him in consequence of their knowledge of him,—to be the most imperious of Officers, the most Military of Military Men, and the most Orange of Orangemen. His appointment to this post in Ireland was a simple act of defiance to the Liberal population of that Country—his reten-

tion there by Ministers anxious to conciliate and do justice to Ireland is a simple impossibility. Sir E. Wetherall will be removed to some Military Command, where his great Military talents will find due scope; and Ministers will abide by the principle, which we have in these pages so often maintained, of employing Military Officers for Military functions, and Civil Officers for Civil functions.

Again the wheel turns; and the Military Reformer has to grieve over the continued and unchallenged existence of the gross abuse of appointing a second Major to Cavalry Regiments at home. The Vote containing this useless appointment was proposed by the Minister without a word of comment, and passed by the House without a word of objection. Let us hope that Mr. Cardwell's attention will yet be called to this abomination, and then its days are surely numbered.

For exacting indeed must be the advocate of Military Reform who does not feel assured of a brilliant victory for most of his views and wishes at the hand of the distinguished Minister for War, who has this year opened out, in a Speech of unexampled clearness and preciseness, a policy that will mark an era in Military Administration. Never was anything happier than the manner in which Mr. Cardwell brought to bear on Military matters all his varied knowledge obtained in the Government of our Colonies in former Ministries.

"Cœlum, non animum, mutant, qui trans mare currunt."

says the old Latin satirist, which we may freely translate,

"Their field of labour, not their brains,
Who change their situations, change."

And in the happy union of the former Colonial Minister with the present Secretary of State for War, we seem to have found the first Statesman who has discovered that a Colonial Policy is the key, the only solution, to the difficulties of Army Reform; that in this question of the Self-defence of the Self-governing Colonies lies the answer to the difficult enigmas of short Army Service, rapid Reliefs from Foreign Service, the abolition of Re-engagements, the formation of adequate Reserves, and the reduction of redundant Stores.

We cannot now extend further our remarks on this remarkable Speech. We know not which to admire in it most, its determination, its moderation, or its reservation. Its determination, in dealing, within the first few days of Office, with subjects leading to a Retrenchment of upwards of a million sterling; its moderation, in not at present touching upon such vast subjects as the Purchase System and Retirement from the Non-purchase Corps; its reservation on that subject most appropriately so treated, the Reserves. It is clear that Mr. Cardwell has in his mind germs of some extensive System for securing an effective Reserve to the Army of

this Country; and we are willing to wait patiently for the development of his System in his own good time; confident that the Minister who has originated his present admirable Policy for Colonial Army Reductions will not be content with any petty measures in the equally important matter of our Army of Reserve.

XXIX.

The New Secretary of State for War.—His Colonial Policy.

(April 3, 1869.)

That the *privilege* of Self-government should entail the *duty* of Self-defence in our Colonies—now that the dogma has been so clearly laid down by Mr. Cardwell in his lucid Statement on presenting the Army Estimates to the House of Commons—will, we feel assured, be henceforth an accepted truism; and the extraordinary confirmation of the truth of this principle which has been supplied during the last few days by the latest intelligence from New Zealand is most gratifying. There the Colonists, after a temporary reverse on first starting on their new career of Self-defence, have thoroughly vindicated their superiority over their savage foes,

and have dealt a blow against the Maori Power which can scarcely fail to bear fruits for a long time to come.

Accepting, then, as all unprejudiced persons must henceforth accept, the principle of leaving the Colonies to their own Military resources without the presence of large bodies of British Troops, let us consider how this affects the Organization of the Imperial forces. Manifestly in many ways. It bears closely upon the questions of Enlistments for short periods of Re-engagement after twelve years' service, of shorter periods of Service abroad, of the formation of adequate Reserves for the defence of this Country in time of Emergency, of the diminution of our Forces, and of the Reduction of excessive Stores of weapons and warlike materials.

In no other Army in Europe is the period of Military Service anything approaching to our period of what we call "limited" Service. The shortest period for which a man can enlist into the British Army is twelve years. And this period is rendered, it may almost be said, *necessary* by the long period of Service required of our Soldiers when sent to such far distant Stations as India, China, Australia, or New Zealand. If, then, we are able to reduce largely the Forces in the distant Colonies of Australia and New Zealand, and if we avail ourselves of the facilities now existing of reaching India and China by the Overland Route, the period of Service at those

Stations may be greatly shortened, and the necessity for engaging men to serve twelve years would cease. We might then go back to ten years, which was formerly the period for which Recruits enlisted, and these ten years might be apportioned into one year for training and drilling, six years for service abroad, and three years for service at home.

Re-engagements, also, would be rendered no longer necessary; as the main excuse for this wretchedly bad System is the necessity of retaining men to complete their long periods of Foreign Service. Under the System of short Enlistments, and no Re-engagements, thousands of men, fully trained in the use of arms, would be sent back annually into the ranks of civil life, and would in effect form a vast body of Reserved men, whom the offer of a Bounty in time of Emergency would bring in large numbers into the ranks of the Army.

Thus every one of the important questions of short Service, no Re-engagements, shorter periods of service abroad, and adequate Reserves at home, all depend directly on the question of the extent of our Colonial Garrisons.

So do also the other two questions which we have enumerated, viz. the numerical Strength of the Army, and the Reduction of excessive Stores. For the whole Force of our Army as maintained for years past has barely sufficed to give Regiments a term of service beyond five or six years at home

before their turn comes to go again abroad. The number of Battalions at home has seldom equalled one-half of the number of Battalions abroad; so that the whole of the Forces at home have been kept up merely as reliefs to the Forces abroad, and men have only had five years at home for every ten years abroad; consequently, any reduction of Forces has been impossible, so long as the Colonies were allowed to call for so many Battalions of Imperial Troops. But a revision of that Policy will enable the Government to make large reductions in the total amount of our Forces, as well as in the vast accumulation of Warlike Stores which have been kept up at such vast expense at home, and with which the Arsenals and Store-houses abroad are literally choked up. To draw in these Stores from distant Foreign Stations, and to keep only in Reserve at home such Stores as are wanted for immediate use, trusting—as well we may—to the Manufacturing Industry of the Country to supply our wants should we find ourselves engaged in war,—this course will be attended with a saving of expense that will render Mr. Cardwell's Administration at the War Office remarkable indeed, as offering the solution of the long-vexed question of "How to diminish materially the Cost of the Army, while still maintaining its full Efficiency."

XXX.

The Colonies and the Depôts.

(April 10, 1869.)

The Army Estimates for the present year,—viewed in the light thrown upon them by the remarkable Speech of the Secretary of State for War by which they were introduced into the House of Commons,—cannot fail to strike the careful observer as the beginning of two very important changes—almost Revolutions—in our Military System; first, the alteration of our relations with the Colonies in the matter of supplying them with Troops at the cost of the Imperial Revenues; second, the abolition before long of the System of Depôt Battalions and, indeed, of all Depôts in this Country.

The proverbial obtuseness of the Members of the House of Commons on all subjects that do not manifestly declare themselves as *party measures,* or as measures affecting their own interest or position, was never more fully illustrated than in the reception which was accorded to the War Minister's declaration of his intended Policy. Not a single Member recognized in it the important bearing it had on Colonial Government; not one of them saw that the old Colonial Minister in his new Military position was revolutionizing the Military position of every one of our Colonies. In the Debate that ensued, one

Member brought forward the case of the Quartermasters of Militia; another dilated on the fumatory habits of a new War Official; a few nibbled at the question of the Dual Government; but not one apprehended the fact that that night's opening Speech had struck the keynote to an effective revision of our Army Expenditure, had opened the only road to a *bonâ fide* Retrenchment of the cost of the Army as regards Imperial Revenues, and had challenged the discussion of the great principle of Self-defence being a natural obligation on the part of the Self-governed.

The Military papers inform us that one or two "points" are shortly coming off, in which interesting Debates and exciting Parliamentary battles may be expected in either House. The Commons are to be entertained on the subject of the Dual Government; the Lords on the subject of the Reserves of the Army.

Both subjects have fallen into good hands. Mr. O'Reilly, in the Lower House, is a good Army Reformer, and, as an Irishman, will be *au fait* at the task of showing that there is, and that there is not, a Dual Government; *that there is not*, inasmuch—as stated by Mr. Cardwell, and as since proved by the publication of the most illogical, inconsequent, and self-contradicting State Paper that has appeared for some time, the Warrant or Memorandum of 1861 on the Position and Powers of Our Commander-in-

Chief—inasmuch, we repeat, as the War Minister is superior to, and responsible for, the Acts of the Commander-in-Chief; *that there is,* inasmuch as two Military Staffs exist in full power, administering the Army, the one at Whitehall, and the other in Pall Mall. Let us suggest to Mr. O'Reilly that the main cause of this wretched anomaly is, that the Military Staff in Pall Mall, who were only intended to be *advisers* to the Civil Minister on points of Military experience, have been allowed to slide into *Powers,* have had large Departments placed under them, and have been allowed, in innumerable cases, to order and to decide, instead of being restricted to their proper functions of advising only.

In the Upper House, Lord Monck will lead off in what will doubtless prove an interesting Debate, on the subject of Army Reserves. There are so many Peers in that Assembly whose opinions on this point will be well worth hearing, that the result can hardly fail to be of value to Mr. Cardwell on this subject, which, as we have elsewhere observed, evidently now engages his earnest attention.

And in the meanwhile his Colonial Policy, as embodied in the Estimates, will pass both Houses *sub silentio.* No one in either Chamber will recognize its importance or even, perhaps, be aware of its existence. We are far from regretting this; we do not think that all the talk of the whole House of Commons will add one mite to the varied informa-

tion or the sound judgment which the Ex-Colonial Minister has brought to bear on his new Army functions, and we are well content that this new Policy should be carried out by the Minister, even without the verbal assistance of either House.

That Policy is in its infancy yet; it at present only calls upon the Colonies to recognize the *principle* of their duty in regard to Self-defence. It will yet spread to their being compelled *practically* to acknowledge that duty by gradually taking upon themselves the cost, first of a portion, ultimately of the whole of the Troops they employ. Now, they will be called upon to pay to the Imperial Exchequer a "Contribution" towards the expenses of the Troops sent to them; by-and-by they will have to pay the whole cost; and after that they will be required to undertake the actual direct payment of the Troops,—as India does,—and so enable the War Minister to reduce a large proportion of his Office in Pall Mall, which is now employed in controlling and checking the Accounts of the Army abroad, that is, in the Colonies.

And, before long, this new Colonial Policy will involve the abolition of the useless Depôt Battalions and of all Depôts at home. A Regiment will be sent out in full force and strength to a Foreign Station, there to remain for a far shorter period of service than at present, and then to be relieved by another strong Regiment, thus doing away with the

necessity of sending out Drafts at all, and consequently, of keeping up any Depôts. The enormous saving of expense that would attend this Reform or "Revolution" of our Military System would enable the Government to organize new Battalions in the Army, and thus to regulate with precision the relief of all Regiments abroad.

We can only express our hearty desire that so able an Army Administrator as Mr. Cardwell has already proved himself to be, may remain in Office at Pall Mall until he has perfected both these items of Military Reform, and indeed many others, which have been advocated in these Columns, and to which he has already shown himself to be very well inclined.

The Purchase System.

(From the 'Britannia,' March, 1869.)

Its Origin.

Before a Standing Army existed in this Country, the Forces were collected, when required for the King's Service, by the individual efforts of the great Lords or Landed Proprietors, who raised each his separate Corps, whether as a single Company or as a collection of Companies forming a Regiment. These Corps the Proprietor raised from among his retainers or tenants at his own cost and brought to

the King, having appointed, as his Subalterns, friends who were willing to pay part of the cost of raising the Corps or Company as the price of their Commission. When tired of commanding the Corps, he handed over the command to some other wealthy Proprietor—a relative or connection it might be—for a sum of money representing the cost expended in raising the Corps; and thus a value came to be affixed to each Commission, from that of Lieutenant-Colonel to that of Ensign or Cornet, as the price at which it might pass from one Officer to another. Hence the Purchase System in the British Army, which has its counterpart in no other branch of the Service, Naval, Military, or Civil, nor in the Public Service of any other Country in Europe.

Early Attempt to Abolish the System.

When these personal or free Corps, placed at the disposal of the Sovereign by their Proprietors, fell into the larger body of the Standing Army of this Country, the Crown endeavoured to obtain the nomination of the Officers to officer the Troops, Companies, and Regiments, respectively. An attempt was made in the time of Queen Anne to vest this power absolutely in the Crown, and to abolish Purchase; but the endeavour failed. The Crown found itself fettered in the appointment of Officers by the necessity of only nominating those who were able and willing, as the price of their Commissions,

to repay the cost of the original raising of the Corps, as the Country was unwilling to provide, out of Public Funds, the large sums that would have been required to buy up the whole of the Commissions held by the Officers of the Cavalry and Infantry Regiments; and for this reason only,—not from any admiration of the System, as now professed by its upholders,—did this first attempt fail for the abolition of the Purchase System.

Its Partial Existence in the Army.

Not only, as we have said, is the System of Purchase confined to the Army, remaining unknown in the Naval Service, and actually made illegal and criminal in the Civil Service, but it is confined to only a portion of the Army itself. In the *Corps de Génie*, the Artillery and Engineers, in the Departmental Corps of the Army and in the Marines, in the Regiments of the Auxiliary Forces, the Militia, and the Volunteers,—in all these branches of the Service the System is unknown. Moreover, in another very important branch of the Military Service it is prohibited, namely, in the Staff Appointments. These not even the most devoted adherents of the System would venture to propose as objects of legalized sale. They are so evidently of vital importance to the safety of an Army, that their being mere matters of purchase or sale to any bidder is at once condemned as preposterous. There

is, moreover, a further limitation of the field of Purchase. Even in the Regiments where other Commissions are purchaseable, the Officers charged with the care of the health of the men, the Surgeon and Assistant-Surgeon,—with the care of the Stores, the Quartermaster,—with the care of the public moneys, the Paymaster,—none of these Officers are allowed to buy or sell their posts of trust and responsibility.

The Uses and Advantages of the Purchase System.

We have done our best to endeavour to learn from the speeches and writings of those who support the Purchase System what are the Uses and Advantages which they ascribe to it. The list, to our comprehension, is a very short one.

It is alleged that by means of this System younger men rise to the command of their Regiments than would do so by any other System of Promotion. This may be granted. But is this at all a certain benefit? Have we not many more scandals and failures in the command of the Purchase Corps than in high places in other Branches of the Public Service? Undoubtedly we have; and as undoubtedly there are other qualifications for command than youth. Experience, judgment, and the weight of authority given by their possession, are at least as valuable qualifications for the control and leading of a large body of men.

Then it is alleged that it brings to the head of the Regiments men of fortune,—men who can afford to keep up the character of the Regiment for hospitality, for its smartness, for the excellence of its Band, and the luxury of its Mess. All these pleas we look upon as simply *bosh;* if not, in some points, as serious evils and disadvantages.

Then it is alleged that the Purchase System, in its conjunction with the System of Promotion by seniority in cases of death vacancies, actually tends to promote the poor Officer, who has not the means to purchase, quicker than any pure System of Promotion by seniority without Purchase could do. This advantage, if it be one, must be of extremely rare occurrence; and when it does occur, it promotes the officer to a death vacancy only after he has been bought over time after time; and to a rank where his future seniors are his former juniors, who have displayed no other proof of fitness for being over him than the greater length of their purses.

Lastly, it is alleged in favour of the System that it exists and has long existed, and that it will cost a great deal of money to get rid of it. This last appears to us to be the only valid plea that has yet been put forward for its retention, namely, the Cost of its Abolition.

The Abuses and Disadvantages of the System.

Our primary objection to the System is that it destroys all feeling, on the part of the Officer purchasing his Commission, that he is entering a course of life which he must make his Profession for life. It tells him that he has purchased a Property which he may enjoy for a few years, and then sell for what he gave for it; that he has paid an entrance fee to be admitted into good society, among gentlemanly and agreeable companions, therein to amuse himself so long as he likes, and that when tired therewith he can get back his deposit and take to any other pursuit that his fancy may dictate. But as to learning thoroughly the duties of his Profession, the history of his Profession, the means of improving and advancing that Profession, why, such a course would manifestly be absurd, and, in fact, unfruitful; for he would not, on selling out, be allowed any increased price in consideration for such knowledge, such proficiency, such attainments; he would not get back even the price of the books he had bought to acquire them; and the veriest dunce in the Regiment would get as much Purchase-Money on leaving it as *he* would, after all his trouble and expenditure of time and money. "No, I don't mean it to be my Profession; why should I try to understand it professionally?" Not one purchasing Officer in a hundred *says* these

words to himself, but not one in a hundred fails to *act* upon them in his heart.

Secondly, while the System of Purchase thus prevents the purchasing Officer from taking any heart in mastering his Profession, it as effectually knocks all heart for it out of the non-purchasing Officer, who, bought over time after time, is at the summit of philosophy when he has brought himself only "not to care for it." To fret himself at being passed over, to yield a grumbling obedience to his Commanding Officer to-day who was his subordinate yesterday, would be highly reprehensible, unprofitable, and unwise. But all his philosophy cannot bring him *to like it;* so his utmost self-control can only succeed in bringing him to the happy state *not to care for it.* "*Not to care for it.* Zeal, patriotism, ambition, away! I have taught myself *not to care for it.* If we go to the East Indies and a lot of fellows die, I may slip up a step, —unless I die first. But it's no use, I must *not care for it.* I'll just jog on; I won't *neglect* my duty, but I must take heed *not to care for it.*" And so by degrees he does not care for it. He does not die of Yellow Jack, and at last he gets a step of promotion; but he does not care for it; and when he has served long enough to sell to the glorious "Reserve Fund" the Commission that he never bought, he gets out of the Army to make way for others, who will care for it in their turn no more than he has learnt to do.

Thirdly, the right to sell their Commissions has engendered, almost universally, amongst Officers habits of extravagance and reckless expenditure. In no other branch of the Public Service is indebtedness so widely the rule. The young Officer knows that if he exceeds his income and gets into debt, he will not have to suffer arrest and bankruptcy, for there is always something to pay his debts with; he can always *sell his Commission*. The 'Gazette' tells the weekly tale of the vast numbers of Officers who leave the Army by sale of their Commissions, exceeding four hundred per annum; and the Records of our Courts of Law tell the tale how constantly the proceeds of these sales are escheated to pay creditors. In fact, the great majority of the sales are forced sales, forced upon the young men by the pressure of their debts; and the money is handed over, not to the parent or guardian who has pinched his own means to find the Purchase-Money in the first instance, but to the tribe of Israelites who have so liberally proffered their personal loans to the young man himself in the earliest days of his Military life, but who lodge their Notes and Writs with his Agents in his closing days.

The Remedy for the Existing System.

This is the most difficult part of our task, but we dare not in our conscience avoid it.

The cure is, we think, gradual Abolition by a plan to be maturely considered, to be approved by Parliament without question of Party, and, when once commenced, to be consistently and persistently pursued to its completion, without reference to the Party which may be in power from time to time.

The expense will be very great. This fact must be admitted, and met face to face from the first. But we believe that the Abolition of the System will finally be attended with economy. We mean with direct and evident economy; for its indirect economy, by increasing the efficiency of the Army, no one can doubt who admits that the Disadvantages of the System outweigh its Advantages.

The first great step towards the Abolition of Purchase should be a large diminution in the number of Regimental Officers of the lowest ranks, both in the Cavalry and in the Infantry; and the pay of every Commission thus reduced should be placed to the credit of a Fund for purchasing Commissions in the higher ranks.

As a second step, all sales of Commissions above the rank of Captain should be abolished; and Field Officers should be selected according to merit, and the grounds of such selection stated in the 'Gazette' that publishes their promotion.

All sales of Commissions that have not been bought by their holders should be at once prohibited, and the Reserve Fund should be used for

more legitimate purposes than enabling Officers to sell what they never bought.

With all these aids to extinction, we still fear that recourse to direct aid from the Exchequer will be unavoidable, as the Commissions below that of a Field Officer yet remain to be provided for; but it need not be to any enormous extent. From two to three millions of money will have to be paid out of the Exchequer before all claims on account of Purchase are extinguished. This could be accomplished in about twelve years, taking a vote of £250,000 a year; and a careful revision of the Army Estimates, keeping only what is good, and cutting off only what is useless, would save this sum five times over in every year. At the same time, we do not deny that a large Price must be paid by the Public to abolish the wretched System of Army Purchase. We rejoice to know that the decision has been come to, to get rid of it; and we have merely aimed, in the foregoing lines, to confirm the conviction which the reflecting portion of the Public have already come to, that its abolition will be well worth even the large Price it must inevitably cost.

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